

MARVEL®

THE OFFICIAL MARVEL® NEWS MAGAZINE!



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TALKS ABOUT THE
VISION AND THE
SCARLET WITCH
LIMITED SERIES
AND THE
WEST COAST
AVENGERS!**



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LONGSHOT, THE
ONE, SQUADRON
SUPREME, STRAW-
BERRY SHORTCAKE,
SOLOMON KANE, FRED
HEMBECK, COMING
ATTRACTIONS AND MORE!**

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EDITORIAL

by Jim Salicrup

If you've heard the Pointer Sisters' hit song "I'm So Excited!" then you've got an idea how thrilled I've been lately. So many new and exciting projects are being scheduled, that we're busting at the seams here at **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** just trying to keep you up on all the latest news. Believe me, it isn't easy. Kurt and I have gone crazy trying to figure out new ways to squeeze even more articles and interviews into our already super crowded pages. Some joker even suggested dropping my Editorial column, but no one listened to me. Over the past few issues we've had to either omit certain features (such as the New Talent Department, Behind the Lines, and the Bullpen Bulletins) or divide an article into shorter parts and run them in several issues instead of one (as we did with the Marvel Age — 1968 feature). "If only we had more pages," I've been heard to cry out in the wee hours here in the Bullpen. Well, who says you can't always get what you want? The big news I've been leading up to, as if you couldn't tell, is that this summer we're going to be launching

our very first **MARVEL AGE ANNUAL**! Yes, Virginia, there is a **Jim Shooter** and he must've heard my late night caterwauling. When the Big Guy called me into his office I had no idea that he had cooked up a plan to solve all my problems. The concept that **Jim** created for the **MARVEL AGE ANNUAL** is so wild and so exciting, I can't figure out why no one ever thought of it before! I don't want to spill the beans just yet, but I will say that most of Marvel's top writers and artists will be contributing to the **Annual** and that you've never seen anything like it! Stay tuned to this magazine for further news.

And if all that wasn't enough to keep me dancing with delight, our new look this issue has certainly made my day! Designer **Janet Jackson** tells us we ain't seen nothin' yet! Just wait till she really gets going a few issues from now! Will the awards committee for excellence in magazine design and layout please take note.

And that's not all! If you really want to know why I'm personally so excited, check out this issue's . . .

MARVEL'S TOP TEN

Hello again. I'm still here. And I've got the Top Ten for the October, November, and December cover dated issues from last year. This list is based on the average sales of these titles during their July, August, and September on-sale period and includes newsstand, subscriptions, and direct sales. "Why are these titles' sales tabulated in such a curious way?" you may wonder. I dunno. Marvel's Director of Newsstand Sales, **Denise Bové**, probably knows — after all, she compiled the list. Too bad she's on the phone right now or I'd ask her. Maybe next time.

1 — **MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS**

- 2 — **X-MEN**
- 3 — **KITTY PRYDE AND WOLVERINE**
- 4 — **X-MEN ANNUAL**
- 5 — **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**
- 6 — **ALPHA FLIGHT**
- 7 — **NEW MUTANTS**
- 8 — **WEST COAST AVENGERS**
- 9 — **G.I. JOE**
- 10 — **THE TRANSFORMERS**

There it is in black and white. A book I scripted is in the Top Ten. It's true, money can buy happiness. When I get that royalty check I'll be able to pay my taxes, my New York City rent, and still have enough left over to buy a Quarter Pounder with Cheese! And if you think I'm excited, you should see **Chris Claremont**!

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MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

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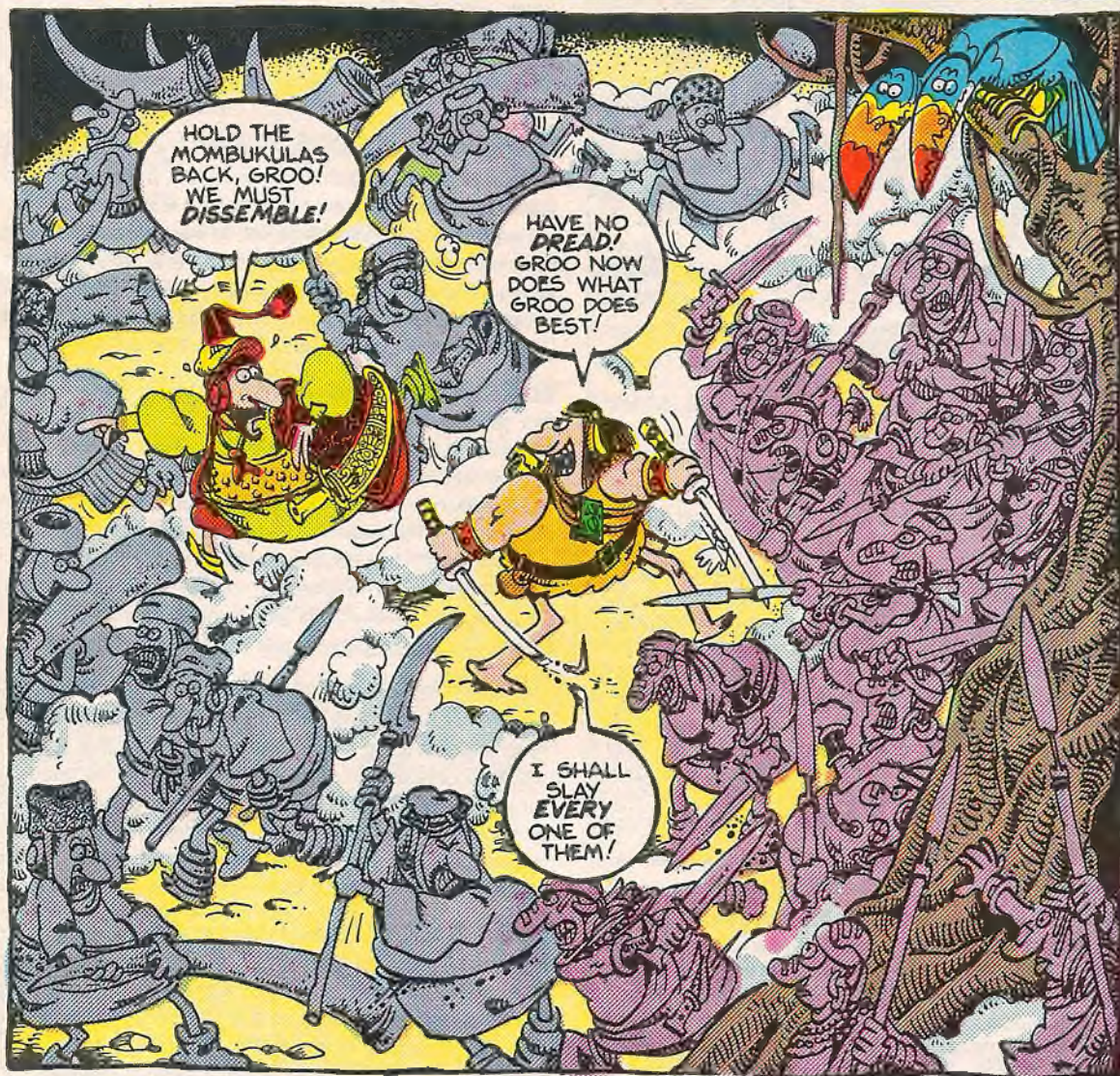
Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic and Star titles bearing a September cover date.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

A **Graphic Novel** is a trade paperback-sized edition.

A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.

Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.



GROO #7: You've got to admit it — he enjoys his work!

Warning: Be sure to reserve copies of your favorite titles as soon as possible! Marvel Comics sell out so fast that unless your favorite comics shop owner knows which titles you want, they might be gone before you can get them. And we don't want anyone to run the risk of missing out on what's happening!

Titles shipping May 7, on sale May 28.

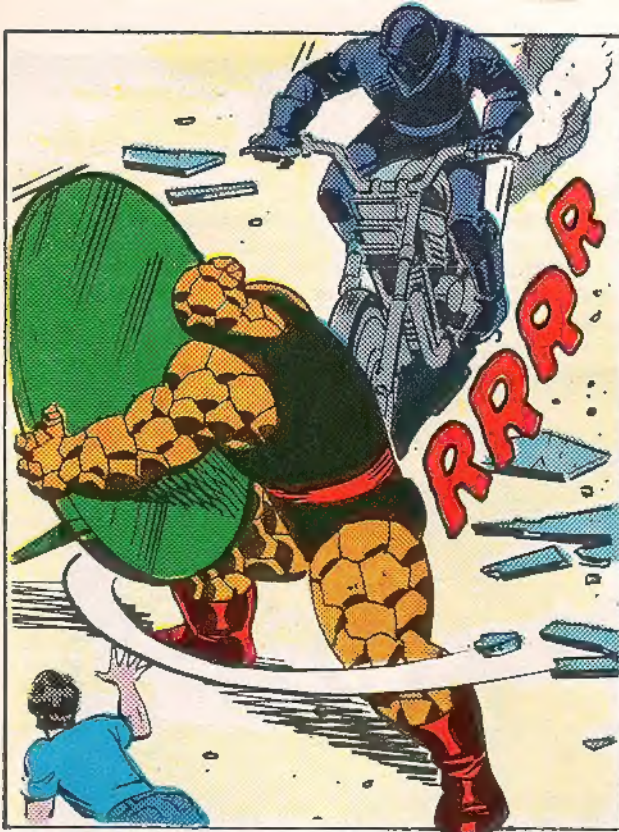
THE THING #27 — Ben Grimm begins a quest for the woman of his dreams only to confront the incredible... **Thunderers!** "Thunderers!" is written by Mike Carlin, penciled by Ron Wilson with guest-inking by Paul Ryan. 65¢.

DAREDEVIL #222 — A mysterious plane crash, a sinister scientist living in a New Jersey swamp, plus the return of

Glorianna O'Brien! How are the three linked? What are the consequences if Daredevil can't connect the clues? **Ephesus Sedd** knows — and he'll kill Daredevil before he tells! "Fear in a Handful of Dust" is written by Denny O'Neil with art by Dave Mazzuchelli. 65¢.

NEW MUTANTS #31 — Kitty and Dazzler face Sunspot and Magma in the deadly **Gladiators'** ring — and the only way out is to kill, or be killed! Plus, the **New Mutants** discover who leads the **Gladiators!** A shocker! "Saturday Night Fight" is written by Chris Claremont and drawn by Bill Sienkiewicz. 65¢.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #6 — The Beyonder has turned **Power Man** and **Iron Fist's** office building into gold! How do you get the people out — and keep them from carting away solid gold trash? Can even **Spider** resist? The sur-



Guess who's back — in **THING** #27!

prising answer lies in this tie-in with **SECRET WARS II** #2, and **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #268. "Gold Rush," written by **Danny Fingeroth**, guest-penciled by **Mike Harris** and inked by **Greg LaRocque**. 65¢.

SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #2 — Raader is about to be executed by the evil **Colonizers** — and the **Colonizer** who has ordered her death is her father! "And A Child Shall Lead Them!" is written by **Bill Mantlo** and penciled and inked by **Jackson Guice**. From the Epic line of comics. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. Direct sales only. \$1.50.

PLANET TERRY #6 — Terry's quest to find his parents must wait — because his beast friend, **Omnus**, is dying! Will the search for the rare mineral that can cure **Omnus** kill **Terry** and **Robota** as well? "Attack of the Tarantulugs!" is written by **Lenny Herman**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jon D'Agostino**. From Star Comics. 65¢.

PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #3 — Publisher J. Jonah Jackal finds a map to fabled Shang-Goo-La! It's a circulation-boosting opportunity beyond compare! But photographer **Peter Porker** quickly discovers that getting to Shang-Goo-La is one thing — and getting out is impossible! "The Town That Never Grew Up!" is written by **Steve Skeates**, penciled by **Mark Armstrong** and inked by **Joe Albello**. Plus: "Iron Mouse" written by **Steve Skeates** and drawn by **Joe Albello**. From Star Comics. 65¢.

CLOAK AND DAGGER #2 — **Dagger** forsakes her crime-fighting life with **Cloak** and returns to her family! But the attempt at domestic happiness turns to heartbreak when **Dagger** discovers the terrible secret that keeps her high-society mother on the fast-track! "Baby, Have You Seen Your Mother Standing in the Shadows?" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Rick Leonardi** and inked by **Terry Austin**. 65¢.

DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #3 — **Vanth** and **Syzygy** take on the entire Instrumentality space armada! Where are **Willow** and the others? Right where **Vanth** wants them — in the middle of the Instrumentality's evil empire! An Epic-Age Classic from **DREADSTAR** #3! "Holocaust!" is written and drawn by **Jim Starlin**. From the Epic line of comics. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

THE GARGOYLE (Limited Series) #4 — No Limited Series ever ended with as many surprises jam-packed between its covers as this! **Isaac** reveals how his best friend, **Buster Henderson**, really died! **Derwyddon** is redeemed! **Isaac** and the **Gargoyle** have a final — and we mean final — confrontation! Plus the return of **Isaac's** true love, **Elaine**! "Battlefield" is written by **J. Marc DeMattels** with art by **Mark Badger**. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

RAWHIDE KID (Limited Series) #2 — A young kid wants to learn how to be a gunfighter from him, a Pinkerton agent wants to capture him and **Buffalo Bill** wants to use him in his world-famous Wild West Show! **Rawhide** must decide what he wants to do when he discovers "What Happens When a Legend Outlives His Time!" written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Herb Trimpe** and inked by **Gerry Talaoc**. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

SQUADRON SUPREME (Limited Series) #1 — They are the supreme heroes of their world facing a society that holds them responsible for its destruction! How will civilization be rebuilt — and who will be its new leaders? And will the **Squadron Supreme's** vision of Utopia only initiate Armageddon? The questions are charged and the answers . . . dynamite in this double-sized first issue of a twelve-part Limited Series! "The Utopia Principle" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Bob Hall** and inked by **John Beatty**. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. \$1.25.

CONAN THE KING #30 — Why are the Picts invading Aquilonia? And where did they get their sophisticated war-machines? If **King Conan** cannot discover that answer, it will mean the end of Aquilonia! But the time he needs has run out — for the Picts have slain his elite guard, the **Black Dragons**! "Revenge on the Black River" is written by **Don Kraar**, penciled by **Don Docherty** and inked by **Geoff Isherwood**. 48 pages. \$1.25.

MOONSHADOW (Limited Series) #3 — Things go from wacky to wicked for **Moonshadow** when he escapes from the Looney Bin only to fall into a life of crime in the interstellar streets of the Mall on the planet Gimmee-Gimmee. From the Epic line of comics. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. Direct sales only. \$1.50. For mature readers.

LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL #2 — The fate of the universe is at stake! But will **Captain Marvel** and the **Avengers** be enough against the deadly power of the **Super Skrull** — and the even deadlier menace of . . . **Thanos**! Reprinting the second half of **CAPTAIN MARVEL** #26 plus both **CAPTAIN MARVEL** #27 and 28! Scripted by **Mike Friedrich**, plotted and penciled by **Jim Starlin** and inked by **Dave Cockrum**, **Pablo Marcos** and **Dan Green**. With new covers by **Starlin** and **Al Milgrom** and a new splash page by **Starlin** and **Cockrum**. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. Direct sales only. \$2.00.

Titles shipping May 14, on sale June 4.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #268 — This one picks up where **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #6 left off! Where did all the

gold go? Only the government — and the Kingpin — know. And soon it will be only the Kingpin! But how can Spidey stop the Kingpin when he is just as guilty of theft as the mob? Written by Tom DeFalco, penciled by Ron Frenz and inked by Joe Rubinstein. 65¢.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #309 — Madcap returns and Nomad must stop him in the wildest action-packed adventure this side of Yancy Street! Whatever you do, you must not miss the truth that Nomad discovers about himself in "Nomad / Madcap / Cap!" written by Mark Gruenwald, penciled by Paul Neary and inked by Dennis Janke. 65¢.

POWER PACK #14 — A day at school turns into a nightmare of trouble when the Power Pack's old enemy, Carmody, kidnaps Katie! "School Daze" is written by Louise Simonson, penciled by June Brigman and inked by Bob Wiacek. 65¢.

THE MICRONAUTS #12 — His name is Scion! And the Micronauts discover what his shocking secret is and why he's seized their ship just when they were about to break through the Space Wall! Have your oxygen tank ready, this is one pulse-pounding saga that will leave you breathless! "Descent into the Maelstrom!" is written by Peter B. Gillis, penciled by Kelly Jones and inked by Danny Bulanadi. 65¢.

ALPHA FLIGHT #26 — Omega Flight is out for Alpha Flight's blood — and this time it looks like they're going to get it! Meanwhile Guardian is acting weird and Heather wants to know why! She is certain that what she doesn't know about her husband can — and will — destroy her! "If at First You Don't Succeed . . ." is written and penciled by John Byrne and inked by Bob Wiacek. 65¢.

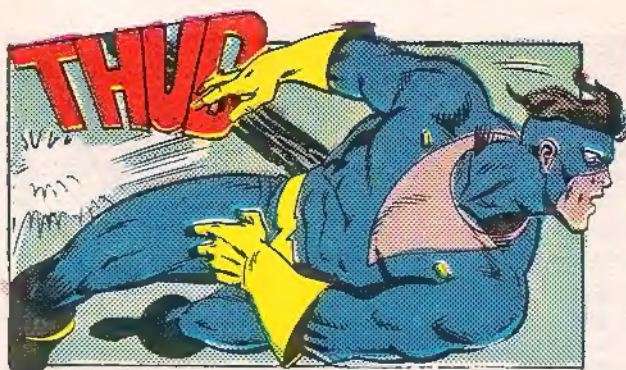
WALLY THE WIZARD #6 — It is a titanic battle of science against magic and truth against deception with Wally caught right in the middle! Merlin's brother, the great wizard Merlin, has returned to Camelot and brings his bag of magic tricks! But is it really magic? Can Merlin do what Merlin can't? "The Return of Merlin" is written and penciled by Ben Brown and inked by Jon D'Agostino. A Star Comic. 65¢.

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES #31 — A Pacific Northwest search for Bigfoot uncovers more than Indy bargained for in "Big Game" written by Linda Grant, penciled by Ricardo Villamonte and inked by Danny Bulanadi. 65¢.

EWOKS #3 — A simple mission turns into a high-flying death-duel in the air when Wicket, Teebo and Princess Kneesaa take off in their hang gliders and soar straight into the path of an Ewok-eating Devil Beast! "Flight to Danger" is written by Dave Manak, penciled by Warren Kramer and inked by Marie Severin. From Star Comics. 65¢.

DAZZLER #39 — Dazzler must flee for her life — from both bounty hunter O.Z. Chase and a brand-new villain: Deathgrip! "Deathgrip!" is written by Archie Goodwin, penciled by Paul Chadwick and inked by Jackson Gulice. 65¢.

GROO THE WANDERER #7 — Because you demanded it — the Sage returns! And just in time, too, because Groo is off on a wild-and-wooly search for the forbidden elephant burial ground! Story and art by Sergio Aragonés with the dubious assistance of Mark Evanier. From the Epic line of comics. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.



Nomad goes it alone in **CAPTAIN AMERICA #309!**

LONGSHOT (Limited Series) #1 — They call him Longshot — but he's trying to discover who he really is and why he can pass through dimensions! His search for his past may end before it begins, because his past is on a deadly search for him — and even his phenomenal luck may not be enough to save him! "A Man Without A Past" is written by Ann Nocenti, penciled by Art Adams and inked by Whilce Portacio and Bill Anderson. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #115 — Conan a miner? When the metal is gold and the veins are on the surface and wider than a man's height, he is! But is even all this gold worth the price they must pay? "Isle of the Faceless Ones" is written by Larry Yakata with art by Val Mayerik. A Marvel Magazine. \$1.50.

THE BLACK DRAGON (Limited Series) #3 — How strong is the plot against the crown? Super-naturally strong! The plotter's demonic power is thrown against the only mortal who can threaten the rebellion — the queen's agent and last hope for medieval England: James Dunreith, the Black Dragon! Written by Chris Claremont with art and a painted cover by John Bolton. From the Epic line of comics. Direct sales only. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. \$1.50. For mature readers.

THE ONE (Limited Series) #1 — Born at the height of a nuclear war to save mankind, he's the One . . . the ultimate super hero! Discover his incredible origin in "The Big Sleep," written, drawn and colored by Rick Veitch. From the Epic line of comics. Direct sales only. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. \$1.50. For mature readers.

TIMESPIRITS #5 — Cusick the Tuscarora and Doot of the Wawenoc are more than American Indians — they are Timespirits! And young Doot learns more of what it means to be a Timespirit when he and the eccentric Cusick travel to a future world where Profit is god and discover the future of Rock and Roll and the ghost of Jimi Hendrix! "A Song and a Dance" is written by Steve Perry with art by Tom Yeates. From the Epic line of comics. Direct Sales only. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. \$1.50.

Titles shipping May 21, on sale June 11.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #30 — The low-down on all this year's Marvel Annuals spotlighted with a cover by John Byrne! Previews of the S.H.I.E.L.D., ETERNALS and BALDER AND KARNILLA Limited Series! Fred Hembeck's Page! Marvel Coming Attractions — and all your other favorite features! Printed on high-quality Mando paper. Direct sales only. 35¢.



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A nasty shock awaits Conan!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK #311 — Bruce Banner is offered the gift of eternal life. But for Banner to have eternal life, the Hulk must die! "Life is a Four-Letter Word" is written by Bill Mantlo, penciled by Mike Mignola and inked by Gerry Taleoc. 65¢.

THE AVENGERS #259 — Firelord joins the Avengers in the most incredible rescue mission of all — the search for Captain Marvel, trapped in the Andromeda Galaxy! "Duty" is written by Roger Stern, penciled by John Buscema and inked by Tom Palmer. 65¢.

CONAN #174 — Conan's, Tetra's and DelMurio's plans for finding buried treasure are cut short when they find, instead, a war-torn town filled with an occupying army and ravaged by the mysterious "Children of the Night!" Written by Jim Owsley, penciled by John Buscema and inked by Bob Camp. 65¢.

MARVEL TALES #179 — The stunning conclusion of Spidey's battle against the Green Goblin originally presented in **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #40**. "Spidey Saves the Day!" is written by Stan Lee, penciled by John Romita and inked by Mickey Demeo. 65¢.

X-MEN #197 — Trapped in a Murderworld of his own making, Arcade forces Colossus and Shadowcat to defend him against the vengeance of Doctor Doom! "To Save Arcade?!" is written by Chris Claremont, penciled by John Romita, Jr. and inked by Dan Green. 65¢.

ROM #70 — On their way back to Galador, Rom and his fellow spaceknights encounter the Hidden God! Who is he? And what possible threat could he be against an army of spaceknights? "The Hidden God!" is written by Bill Mantlo, penciled by Steve Ditko and inked by Kim DeMulder. 65¢.

MOON KNIGHT #4 — The Countess has come to buy a painting, only to find herself about to lose her life — in a blood sacrifice that will condemn not only her soul, but that of four other women as well! Where is Moon Knight? Only the Priests of Khonshu know — and they're not telling!

"Bluebeard's Castle" is written by Alan Zelenetz, penciled by Chris Warner and inked by E.R. Cruz. 65¢.

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #119 — Danny's life is saved — but at what cost to his soul? "Daughter of the Dragon King" is written by Jim Owsley, penciled by Mark Bright and inked by Jerry Acerno. 65¢.

ROYAL ROY #3 — The new Cashelot currency is out — and carries a curse that strikes anyone who touches it! Is it because Royal Roy's picture is on the bills — or because the evil Archduke Kraven von Krunch is at the court? "Curse of the Royal Roy Dollar Bill" is written by Stan Kay, penciled by Warren Kremer and inked by Jon D'Agostino. A Star Comic. 65¢.

MUPPET BABIES #3 — Kermit and the Muppet Babies learn why fairy tales should stay in the realm of fantasy — when one suddenly becomes reality in "Kermit and the Beanstalk" written by Stan Kay with art by Marie Severin. A Star Comic. 65¢.

GET ALONG GANG #3 — What is the mystery on Mystery Mountain? The Get Along Gang goes up to find out — and soon regrets that they ever asked in the "Creature of Mystery Mountain" written by Dave Manak, penciled by John Costanza and inked by Jacqueline Roettcher. A Star Comic. 65¢.

THE SWORD OF SOLOMON KANE (Limited Series) #1 — The double-sized premiere of Conan creator Robert E. Howard's first fiction hero! The dour Puritan leaves England for Africa on a trail of vengeance which holds the seeds of Kane's eternal damnation, in "Red Shadows," written by Ralph Macchio, penciled by Steve Carr and Bret Blevins and inked by Bret Blevins. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

G.I. JOE #39 — Cobra has again captured Dr. Adele Burkhart! The only way the Joes can get her out is to attack Cobra where it is its strongest — the impenetrable jungle fortress where she is being held prisoner! Plus: a shocking new development in the life of Storm Shadow! "Walk through the Jungle" is written by Larry Hama, penciled by Rod Whigham and inked by Andy Mushynsky. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #1 — Spidey has kayoed kingpins of crime, mopped up mobsters and gotten J. Jonah Jameson's goat countless times. But now he faces his greatest challenge of all when he must stop a young, crippled, science whiz-kid from becoming the next mastermind of crime! "Future Max" is written by Ann Nocenti with art by Tony Salmons. \$1.25.

MARVEL FANFARE #22 — You'll never forgive yourself if you miss this all-out action saga! It's the ultimate clash of arms and armor — Iron Man vs. Doctor Octopus! The first of a special two-part thriller written by Roger McKenzie and drawn and hand-painted by Ken Steacy. Plus: a Ken Steacy portfolio that will knock your socks off! Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. Direct sales only. \$1.50.

Titles shipping May 28, on sale June 18.

FANTASTIC FOUR #282 — A stunning tie-in with this month's **SECRET WARS II** saga — pitting the FF against the Psycho-Man on his home turf of the Microverse! And if Sue Richards has her way, the Psycho-Man will never live

to return to Earth! "Inwards to Infinity!" is written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Jerry Ordway**. 65¢.

THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN #198 — the secrets of **Obadiah Stane's** past are revealed! But in the present — **Stane** has **Bethany Cabe**, and intends to use her against **Tony Stark**! Both **Iron Men** challenge **Stane** — but the **Circuit-Breaker** bars the way! "Call Him Stane" is written by **Denny O'Neill**, penciled by **Sal Buscema** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 65¢.

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #106 — Part Two of the explosive **Spidey / Wasp / Paladin** epic! Gangsters are muscling in on a small shipping company — but with **Janet Van Dyne** as majority stockholder, they're in for a *fight*! "No Fury!" is scripted by **Peter David**, penciled by **Luke McDonnell** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. 65¢.

THE NEW DEFENDERS #147 — **Hotspur** is just a demon who loves to have fun! **The New Defenders** discover that his idea of fun is destroying property and killing people! But what can **the New Defenders** do? The villain has the power to warp their minds anyway he wishes! "... And Games" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Art Nichols**. 65¢.

STAR WARS #99 — Talk about pouring gasoline on a fire — **Lando's** in trouble, and the only way **Han** and **Luke** can save him is to start a war! Plus: the long-awaited return of **Captain Drebble Lemo**! And discover how **Sanda** clears up the mystery of the Dancing Goddess in "Touch of a Goddess" written by **Jo Duffy**, penciled by **Cynthia Martin** and inked by **Art Nichols**. 65¢.

THOR #359 — All **Asgard** refuses to believe it! All **Thor's** friends claim it can't be so! But it's true — **Thor** has endorsed **Loki** as king of the Realm Eternal! "The Grand Alliance, or Life With Loki" is written and drawn by **Walt Simonson**. 65¢.

ELFQUEST #2 — **The Wolfriders** begin the most perilous quest of their history in "Journey to Sorrow's End," written by **Richard** and **Wendy Pini** with art by **Wendy Pini**. From the **Epic** line of comics. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

SECRET WARS II (Limited Series) #3 — **The Beyonder** takes over Earth! Guest-starring **Daredevil**, **the Hulk** and **the Avengers**! 'Nuff said! Written by **Jim Shooter**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Steve Lelaloha**. Printed on high-quality Mando paper. 75¢.

THE TRANSFORMERS #8 — **The Autobots** are dead! The evil **Decepticons** are victorious! Now, after four million years — enter the incredible **Dinobots**! Written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **William Johnson** and inked by **Brad Joyce**. Printed on high quality Mando paper. 75¢.

THE SPIDER-MAN INDEX #6 — The ultimate compilation of everything you ever wanted to know about **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** issues #144-158 plus a special section on **GIANT-SIZE SPIDER-MAN** #'s 1-6! Characters, credits, synopses, color cover reproductions and more! Compiled by **George Olshevsky**. Printed on high quality Mando paper. Direct Sales only. \$1.25.

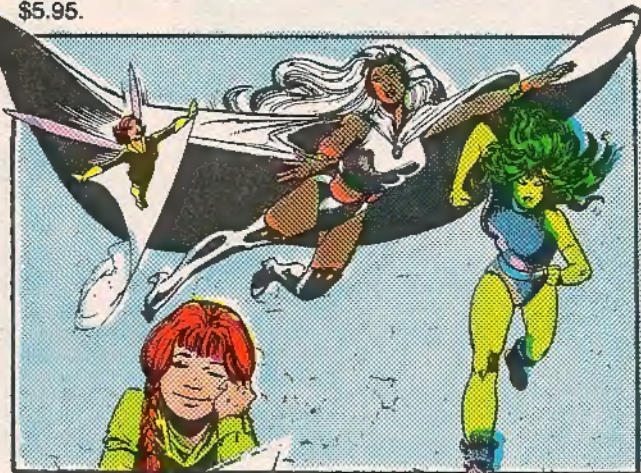
DOCTOR WHO #12 — The adventure of time's most amazing traveler continues! It's **the Doctor** and a small band of **Guardian Angels** against an entire city full of cannibals

in "End of the Line" written by **Steve Parkhouse** with art by **Dave Gibbons**. And in "The Free-Fall Warriors" **the Doctor** and his new friend, the literary **Dr. Asimoff**, attend the fabulous Festival of Five Planets intending to have fun — only to wind up in the middle of an interstellar war! Written by **Steve Parkhouse** with art by **Dave Gibbons**. Plus everyone's favorite column on what's happening with **the Doctor**, "Who Knows," written by **Patrick Daniel O'Neill**, the senses-shattering conclusion of "Star Tigers" featuring **Abslom Daak**, **Dalek Killer** — and a new cover by **Dave Gibbons**. All this printed on high-quality Baxter paper, yet! Direct sales only. \$1.50.

COYOTE #13 — **Natalia** is under the spell of the were-Coyote. Can **Coyote** free his love or will the demons he's summoned for help slay her in the process? "Snakes Alive" is written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Charles Truog** and inked by **Frank Springer**. Plus: "Scorpio Rose" written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Todd McFarlane** and inked by **Art Nichols**. From the **Epic** line of comics. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. Direct sales only. \$1.50. For mature readers.

EPIC ILLUSTRATED #31 — Featuring the double-length conclusion of "Cobalt-60" written by **Larry Todd** and drawn by **Mark Bode**; a new chapter in "The Last Galactus Story" written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Terry Austin**; "The Seed and the Sower" by **John Jay Muth** and **Kent Williams**; "Year 20" by **Marc Hempel**; a "Doctor Watchstop" story by **Kevin Macklin**; a sword and sorcery story set in the Old West written by **Archie Goodwin** and drawn by **Victor de la Fuente**; "The Sword Shrlil" written and drawn by **Paty Cockrum**; and another chapter of "Toadswart" written and drawn by **Tim Conrad**. From the **Epic** line of comics. Printed on high-quality Danner paper. \$2.50. For mature readers.

THE ALADDIN EFFECT (Graphic Novel) — **Venture Ridge, Wyoming**, is a town under siege, trapped in a mysterious, impenetrable force-field! The reason why is locked inside young **Holly-Ann Ember's** genes — and no one, not even **Holly-Ann**, knows it. Not yet —! But **A.I.M.** has vowed to discover the source of incredible power that exists in **Venture Ridge**. And when they do, they will control the world-conquering power of — **the Aladdin Effect**! Featuring: **the Wasp**, **She-Hulk**, **Storm** and **Tigra**! Plotted by **Jim Shooter**, dialogued by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Greg LaRocque** and inked by **Vinnie Colletta**. A **Marvel Graphic Novel**. Printed on high-quality Baxter paper. \$5.95.



An advance look at **THE ALADDIN EFFECT**!

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

Titles shipping in June.

THE THING #28 — "In This Corner" by Carlín, Wilson and Sinnott.
DAREDEVIL #223 — by O'Neil and Mazzuchelli, cover by Byrne.
NEW MUTANTS #32 — by Claremont and Leialoha
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #7 — by Fingerioth, Mooney and LaRocque.
PLANET TERRY #7 — "The Case of the White-Haired Kid" by Kay, Kremer and D'Agostino.
FRAGGLE ROCK #4 — "The Dizziest Doozer in the World" by Kay and M. Severin.
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE #4 — "The New Strawberry Shortcake" by Kay, Post and Edelman.
DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #4 — by Starlin.
RAWHIDE KID #3 — by Mantlo, Trimpe and Talaoc
SQUADRON SUPREME #2 — by Gruenwald, Hall and Beatty.
THE SECTAURS #3 — by Mantlo
STARSTRUCK #4 — by E. Lee and Kaluta
WEST COAST AVENGERS #1 — by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
AVENGERS ANNUAL #14
LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL #3
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #269 — by DeFalco, Frenz

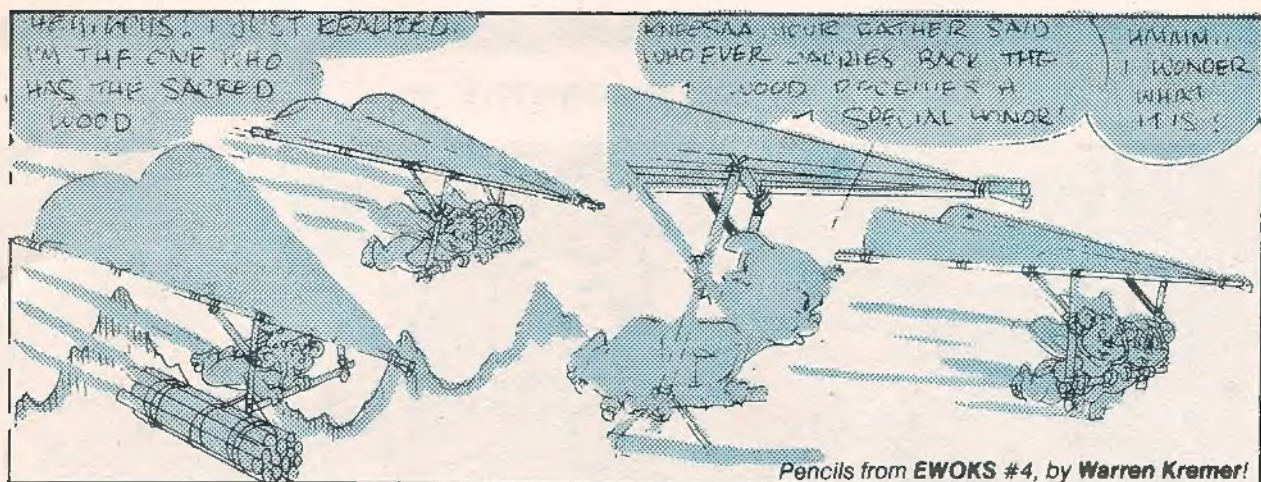
Dreadstar does what he does best!



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and Rubinstein.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #310 — "Serpents of the World Unite" by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
POWER PACK #15 — "Reckoning" by L. Simonson, Brigman and Wlasek.
MICRONAUTS #13 — by Gillis, Jones and Bulanadi.
ALPHA FLIGHT #27 — by Byrne and Williams.
WALLY THE WIZARD #7 — "Time after Time" by Bolling.
TOP DOG #4 — "The Secret of Top Dog" by Herman, Kremer and Roettcher.
HEATHCLIFF #4 — "The Crooked Cat" by DeCesare, Kremer and Roettcher.
DOCTOR STRANGE #73 — by Stern, Smith and Austin.
GROO THE WANDERER #8 — by Aragonès with Evanier.
LONGSHOT #2 — by Nocenti, A. Adams and Portacio.
PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5 — by L. Simonson and Wilshire.
THE FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #1 — Compiled by Olshevsky.
THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH #1 — by Englehart, Howell and Mushynsky.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #116 — "Homecoming" by Kraar and Chan.
BLACK DRAGON #4 — by Claremont and Bolton.
SISTERHOOD OF STEEL #5 — by Marx and Vosburg.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #31 — Dave Cockrum's NIGHT-CRAWLER Limited Series! **IRON MAN** #200! John Byrne's **HULK**! And more!
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #312 — "Monster" by Mantlo, Mignola and Talaoc.
THE AVENGERS #260 — by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN #175 — "The Scarlet Personage" by Owsley, J. Buscema and Camp.
MARVEL TALES #180 — by Lee, Romita and Demeo.
X-MEN #198 — "Lifedeath II" by Claremont and Windsor-Smith.
ROM #71 — "Shame" by Mantlo, Ditko and Russell.
MOON KNIGHT #5 — by Zelenetz and Warner.
G.I. JOE #40 — by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
ETERNALS #1 — by Gillis, S. Buscema and Gordon.
DREADSTAR #20 — by Starlin and De La Rosa.
FANTASTIC FOUR #283 — by Byrne and Ordway.
IRON MAN #199
PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #107 — by David, S. Buscema and Breeding.
THE NEW DEFENDERS #148 — by Gillis, S. Buscema and Nichols.
THOR #360 — by W. Simonson.
ELFQUEST #3 — by W. and R. Pini.
SECRET WARS II #4 — by Shooter, Milgrom and Leialoha.
S.H.I.E.L.D. #1 — by Harras and Neary.
TRANSFORMERS #9 — by Budiansky, Johnson and Joyce.
STAR WARS #100 — by Duffy and Martin.
MARVEL TEAM-UP INDEX #1 — compiled by Olshevsky.
DOCTOR WHO #13
ALIEN LEGION #9 — by Zelenetz, Warner and Embertlin.



Titles shipping in July

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THE THING #29 — "Gator" by Carlin Wilson and Sinnott

DAREDEVIL #224 — by O'Neill and Mazzuchelli.

NEW MUTANTS #33 — by Claremont and Leialoha.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #8 — by Fingerioth and McLeod.

WEST COAST AVENGERS #2 — by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott

PLANET TERRY #

PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #4

RED SONJA #11

CLOAK AND DAGGER #3 — by Mantlo, Leonard and Austin.

DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #5 — by Starlin.

RAWHIDE KID #4 — by Mantlo, Trimpe and Talaoc.

SQUADRON SUPREME #3 — by Gruenwald, Hall and Beatty.

CONAN THE KING #31 — "Force of Arms" by Kraar, Docherty and Isherwood.

MOONSHADOW #4 — by DeMatteis and Muth.

SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #3 — by Mantlo and Gulce.

LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL #4

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #270 — by DeFalco, Frenz and Rubinstein.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #311 — "Jobs" by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.

POWER PACK #16 — "The Kid Who Fell to Earth" by L. Simonson, Brigman and Wiacek.

MICRONAUTS #14 — by Gillis, Jones and Bulanadi.

ALPHA FLIGHT #28 — by Byrne and Williams.

WALLY THE WIZARD #8

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES #32 — by Grant, Ditko and Patterson.

DAZZLER #40 — by Goodwin, Chadwick and Gulce

EWOKS #4

GROO THE WANDERER #9 — by Aragonés with Evanier

LONGSHOT #3 — by Nocenti, A. Adams and Portacio

THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH #2 — by Englehart, Howell and Mushynsky.

THE FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #2 — compiled by Olshesky.

THE AVENGERS ANNUAL #14

THE FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #19

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #117 — "Lords of the Falcon" by Yakata and Chan.

THE ONE #2 — by Veltch.

BLACK DRAGON #5 — by Claremont and Bolton.

TIMESPIRITS #6 — by Perry and Yeates.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #32 — **X-MEN #200!** The ALPHA FLIGHT / X-MEN Limited Series! More!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK #313 — "Through the Past Darkly" by Mantlo, Mignola and Talaoc.

THE AVENGERS #261 — by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.

CONAN #176 — "Argos Rain" by Owsley, J. Buscema and Camp.

MARVEL TALES #181 — by Lee, Romita and Demeo.

ROM #72 — by Mantlo, Ditko and Russell.

X-MEN #199 — "A Spiral Path" by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green

MOON KNIGHT #6 — by Zelenetz and Warner

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #120 — "Dragonslayer" by Owsley, Bright and Acerno.

ROYAL ROY #4

MUPPET BABIES #4

GET ALONG GANG #4

THE SWORD OF SOLOMON KANE #2 — by Macchio and Blevins.

G.I. JOE #41 — by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.

ETERNALS #2 — by Gillis, S. Buscema and Gordon.

MARVEL FANFARE #23

FANTASTIC FOUR #284 — by Byrne and Gordon.

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #108 — by David, Von Eeden and Breeding.

THE NEW DEFENDERS #149 — "Lonely as a Cloud" by Gillis, Perlman and Nichols.

STAR WARS #101 — by Duffy and Martin.

THOR #361 — by W. Simonson.

TRANSFORMERS #10 — by Budiansky, Johnson and Joyce.

ELFQUEST #4 — by W. and R. Pini

S.H.I.E.L.D. #2

SECRET WARS # # Shooter, Milgrom and Leialoha

IRON MAN #20

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #1 — by Fingerioth and Mooney

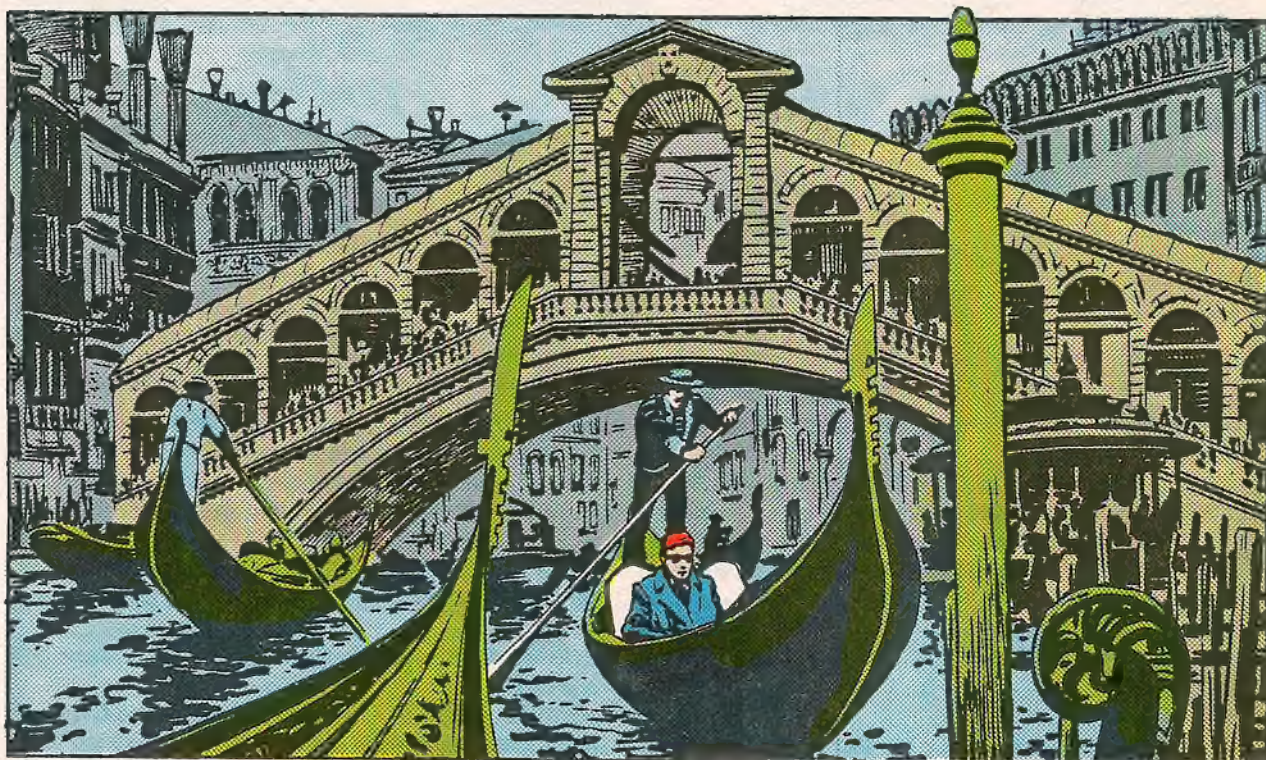
MARVEL TEAM-UP INDEX #2 — compiled by Olshesky

DOCTOR WHO #1

COYOTE #14 — by Englehart, Truog and Springer.

SAVAGE TALES #1

EPIC ILLUSTRATED #32



ITEM! Boy, do we have a bunch of stuff to tell you about! To start off with, we're proud to announce the long-awaited **X-MEN / ALPHA FLIGHT** crossover special! It's a two-part Limited Series, scripted by **Chris Claremont** with art by **Paul Smith** and **Bob Wiacek** — from a plot by **Ann Nocenti**, **Denny O'Neil** and **Jim Shooter**! The outlaw mutants and the northern stars face **Loki** ... so you know it's going to be a battle to remember! **X-MEN / ALPHA FLIGHT #1** will be showing up in September, so mark your calendars!

ITEM! And while you've got your calendars out, check off September 17th! That's the release date of **THE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL**! The story was just too big for even an annual, so we invented a new package for it! It's 64 pages long, on high-quality Baxter paper, with *no ads*! Written by **Chris Claremont**, with art by the amazing **Art Adams** (check out this issue's **LONGSHOT** preview for more on him), we can't reveal much about the story — except that aside from the **New Mutants**, it also features **Storm** and the **Enchantress**!

ITEM! With **Loki** in one story, and the **Enchantress** in the other ... can it be possible that these two projects we've mentioned are connected in some way? Better believe it! And more than that, the story that begins in **X-MEN / ALPHA FLIGHT** and continues in **THE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL** comes to its shocking finale in this year's

X-MEN ANNUAL! The honors on this one are done by **Chris Claremont**, **Art Adams** and **Terry Austin** — and if that's not the fitting caper to the story of the summer season, we don't know what is!

ITEM! More **X-Men** news! You may have noticed that the big number, 200, is rapidly approaching — and we decided to make this one special right from the start! So we're flying the whole **X-Men** crew to Paris! **Ann Nocenti**, **Chris Claremont**, **John Romita Jr.** ... *everybody's* going to La Belle France for the plotting session that will result in **X-MEN #200**! All they'll tell us is that the story does take place in Paris, and features the trial of **Magneto** before the International Court! We pressed **Chris** for more information, but he just smiled and said, "*Je ne parl pas Anglais!*"

ITEM! The **X-Men** crew aren't the only world travellers at Marvel! **David Mazzuchelli**, who has been wowing fandom every month with his spectacular pencils and inks on **DAREDEVIL**, is in Italy! And the results of his trip will be showing up in **DAREDEVIL #221** and **222**! The sightless adventurer will journey to Italy in those issues — and when he does, check out the scenery! **David** assures us it'll all be authentic, down to the last brush line! Flying more than 4000 miles to get your backgrounds right — that's what we call devotion to one's art!

ITEM! The comics industry is healthier now than at any time in the past twenty

years, but there are still people out there who don't know how diverse and interesting the comics field is ... and some who don't even know comics exist! We're doing our best to wake those people up and make 'em notice comics again — maybe you've noticed. Comic racks are popping up in all kinds of new places, from the neighborhood Fast Fare store to the nationwide Waldenbooks chain, and sampler bags of comics in K-Marts and Toys 'R' Us stores! The **SPIDER-MAN AND POWER PACK** comic published with the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse has helped show that comics can be educational and helpful, and more public service projects like it are planned. We're also working with advertisement co-op programs, personal appearances by our creators (and characters) in malls, comics stores and amusement parks, and more. We're doing the best we can, but if we're really going to let people who don't read comics know what they're missing, we could really use your help. Do you have a friend who doesn't read comics? Maybe they just don't know that comics as diverse as **GROO**, **POWER PACK**, **MOONSHADOW**, **TOP DOG**, **THE RAWHIDE KID** and **ELFQUEST** exist. So spread the word ... comics have something for everyone!

ITEM! That's about it. See you next month!

The Marvel Age Interview:

Steve Englehart

by Kurt Busiek

To longtime Marvel fans, the name of **Steve Englehart** is a familiar one. **Steve** began his career in comics in the early Seventies, as **Neal Adams**'s assistant, but when he was offered the regular writing assignment on the **Beast** series in **AMAZING ADVENTURES**, he quickly went from being an uncredited artist to being regarded as one of the most talented writers in the industry. **Steve** wrote quite a number of series for Marvel, including very well-respected runs on **THE AVENGERS**, **THE DEFENDERS**, **DR. STRANGE**, **CAPTAIN AMERICA**, **MASTER OF KUNG FU**, **THE INCREDIBLE HULK**, and **CAPTAIN MARVEL**. In 1975, **Steve** left Marvel and shortly thereafter left the comics field completely to write a novel for Dell Publishing, *The Point Man*. More recently, it's been the industry's good fortune to see **Steve** back again, notably as a creator for our Epic comics line, with **COYOTE**. Now **Steve** is back at Marvel full force and writing a number of projects, among them Limited Series featuring **THE SILVER SURFER** and **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** and a regular monthly **WEST COAST AVENGERS** series. The **SILVER SURFER** project is still a ways in the future, but both **THE WEST COAST AVENGERS** and **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** premiere soon. We collared **Steve** to find out his plans for the two books, and you'll find the results right on the other side of that asterisk.

★

Let's start off with your regular

series, **THE WEST COAST AVENGERS**. You've done **THE AVENGERS** before . . . so this time, what's different, and what's not?

What's the same, I'm finding, is the sense of camaraderie among the **Avengers**. In my previous incarnation, I started with **THE DEFENDERS** and then immediately picked up **THE AVENGERS**. **THE DEFENDERS** — this was the **Dr. Strange / Hulk / Sub-Mariner** time — was supposed to be a team of non-team-players. So I naturally fell into doing **THE AVENGERS** as a team of team players, even though they do bicker and all that stuff. I've always had a nice feeling for writing about teamwork and friendship among the people who've chosen to be together in a group.

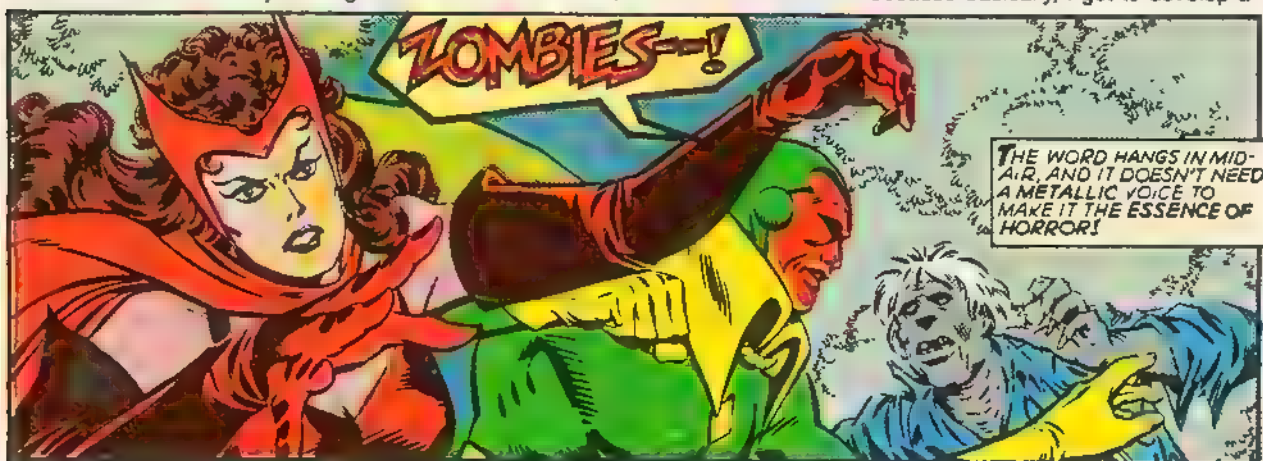
I'm finding, in doing **THE WEST COAST AVENGERS**, that while they may, when formality dictates, say "We are the **West Coast Avengers**," in general, they talk about being **Avengers**. As far as I'm concerned, it's as if **Roger Stern** and I are doing sort of simultaneous versions of different parts of one larger group. So that's the same — the fact that these people work together, like each other, have respect for each other and a respect for the concept of being an **Avenger**.

What's different, of course, is the characters. When I wrote **THE AVENGERS**, we went through character changes, but it was basically coming more from the "Marvel's top stars get together" concept. We had **Captain America**, **Iron Man** and **Thor**, then there were the **Vision** and **Wanda**, and then the people who came and went. In this one, it's a little inverted. I

mean, the leader is **Hawkeye**, and **Iron Man** is taking orders from him. Then you've got **Wonder Man** and **Tigra** and **Mockingbird**, who are basically still new to this. **Wonder Man** has been around since I left **THE AVENGERS** the last time — I was the guy who brought him back from the dead — but he's been in and out. **Tigra** has been mostly out of the team, and **Mockingbird** just got in, because she just married **Hawkeye**. So in a sense, the easy answer to what's different is "the characters." Every team has a mix of personalities, and I find a lot that happens to them depends on who they are. I write from character, generally.

Also, I'm playing this one more as a **West Coast** version, and living on the **West Coast**, I can say that. I mean, they're a little more laid back, they're a little looser group than the **East Coast Avengers** would be. I think it's appropriate, actually, that **John Buscema** is drawing the **East Coast Avengers**, with **Cap** and all those guys, and **Milgrom** and **Sinnott** are doing the **West Coast Avengers**, because **Milgrom** has a slightly looser touch to the whole thing. The **East Coast** group now strikes me as being a little bit more of the grand tradition, sort of the icons of the group, and we've got the wackos (Laughter).

I find that fun. I wouldn't want to come back and do the same thing I did eight years ago. This is no reflection on any of the **East Coast** characters, but it's just . . . I wouldn't be interested in coming back and writing **Thor** and **Cap** and all that stuff again. This I like, because basically, I get to develop a



BZZZZT!



new team—they have existed, but this is apparently their first unending concentrated effort—and I get to work with the new characters. And still, it's within the framework of the Avengers, which I've always liked.

You mentioned Al Milgrom's more relaxed and laid-back style. You've been working with Al for a long time, going back, I think, to when you were the writer/artist team on CAPTAIN MARVEL in 1974 and 1975. What's it like working with Al again?

Well, it's fun. Al is a fun guy. There must be a better word than that. Al's a nice guy, he's very friendly, and easy to work with. Al is a writer as well as an artist, he's an editor. Al has a real encyclopedic knowledge of what it takes to do good comics. And this time, we both have nine more years of experience under our belts. We both have a lot more to work with. *draw from*

Okay. Can you tell us what we can expect to see in THE WEST COAST AVENGERS?

Well, I can't tell you too much about that, because then there wouldn't be any surprises. We're starting off both THE WEST COAST AVENGERS and THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH with a four-part story, but there are loose ends that will lead into other things. Basically, well, THE WEST

COAST AVENGERS has Wonder Man and THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH has the Vision, who has Simon Williams' brain patterns. So there's an obvious place to start off. I could probably say no more, and people would figure out that the villain is the Grim Reaper.

We resolve the Grim Reaper situation, and the whole thing is kind of a long examination of brotherhood... who exactly is whose brother, and what it means to be brothers and so on and so forth. Also in the story is Ultron, and Ultron is basically the loose end.

Although in actuality it wasn't planned this way, it's hard to walk around the Marvel Universe without tripping over some connections. I introduce Hank Pym in the first issue of THE WEST COAST AVENGERS. The reason for that, basically, was in line with what I was saying before: Three of the five West Coast Avengers are new, more or less, they don't come out of the great tradition that I was talking about, and I wanted another character who did. Now let me say quickly, as most people know, there's a limit of six to the number of Avengers that are allowed in the group, and though everyone in the Avengers seems to think that Pym is going to be that sixth one, he is not. Hank is there, primarily, on a

story level, to provide one more link to the old days, to add a little tradition. Also to rehabilitate him a little, after all the stuff he went through three or four years ago. And finally, I have a plan for what he's doing there in reality, out of the story, and I'm not going to say much about that, except for the fact that it does involve Ultron. If I leave it at that, it sounds obvious—but what we're planning to do is not quite so obvious. If you're interested in hints, I might point out that Ultron is a major character in the first couple of issues of both THE WEST COAST AVENGERS and THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH—but Ultron also got trashed during SECRET WARS. So there's a question of how he could be on the planet of the Secret Wars and on Earth at the same time.

I bet there is. But you're not telling, so let's go on. You mentioned that there's a six member limit to the West Coast Avengers. You currently have five, plus Henry Pym, who you say will not be that sixth member. Who will be?

It's a surprise, so I can't tell you who it's going to be. As the press release announcing this series says, it's someone who is no stranger to teamwork, and who will add a lot of raw power to the line-up. He or she will appear on the last page of issue #3.

Am also toying more and more with

the idea that the sixth member we have at that point may not be the sixth member we have, say, a year from now. I am considering the disappearance of one of the current members. I write from character, as I said. I've got these characters, and I'm playing them for all they're worth — but as I've said and other people have said throughout time, once you really get into this stuff, it starts writing itself. One of the characters may be writing his or herself out of the strip.

Who? Okay, never mind. You mentioned that you see THE WEST COAST AVENGERS and THE AVENGERS as two parts of one ongoing series. How does THE WEST COAST AVENGERS relate to THE AVENGERS on a month-to-month basis?

Well, I don't think they're going to connect too much. I see **Roger** and myself as doing two different foci of the umbrella group, "the Avengers," but I don't know how much back-and-forth there's going to be. For one thing, **Roger** tends to work months in advance — I think **Roger** knows what he's going to do for the next year — and as you may have gathered, I sort of go from month to month. I don't know more than a month ahead, and I usually change my mind anyway, when I sit down and write. So our working patterns are very different.

I've kept **Roger** informed about what I'm doing, since the two groups will interact in little ways. If **Hawkeye** has to talk to **Jan**, leader to leader, maybe **Hank** will want to talk to **Jan** too. So there'll be stuff like that, but I'm not really interested in heavy continuity between the two. Starting next year, **Roger** and I would like to do a **West Coast / East Coast Avengers** team up, possibly as an annual event. But that's something that I won't think about, probably, until February of '86.

Okay, then let's shift gears, and go on to a couple of East Coast Avengers: the Vision and the Scarlet Witch, a couple of characters that you've been connected with for quite a while. You married them off, after all (Laughter). Currently, in THE AVENGERS, they're in hot water over the Vision's temporary takeover of the world. So what does this mean for the beginning of the twelve-part VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH Limited Series?

Well, you just put your finger on the key point, which is that it's limited. I didn't want to spend the first couple of issues of what should be a fairly "stand-alone" concept, the twelve-issue thing, tying up loose ends from the characters' other appearances in the regular **AVENGERS**. So basically, I took the first ten pages of the 39 page story, and tied it up. The way it's tied up is that the **Vision** and **Wanda**, in order

to escape the government's supervision of the **Avengers**, quit the **Avengers**. Since they almost immediately have an adventure with the **West Coast Avengers**, it clearly doesn't change their status among their peers, at all, but they are officially out of the group, at this point. As I said, I wanted to get going on what I wanted to do.

The nice thing about **Wanda** and the **Vision**, in addition to their characters, which I've always liked, is that they know practically everybody in the Marvel Universe, and are related to most of them. All the way from **Wanda's** father **Magneto** to her brother **Pietro**, up there with **Crystal** and the **Inhumans** on the Moon. The **Vision's** brother is **Wonder Man**, and it just goes on and on. I see **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** as very much a family strip. This is a strip about two people, but it's also about all their relationships. It's a very human series. It definitely has a mystical sense to it. I'm not doing **DR. STRANGE** this time, not doing **Doc** in the guise of the **Scarlet Witch**, but because she's the **Scarlet Witch**, and because the last Limited Series had that real nice opening with **Samhain**, the Halloween god . . . it's a place to do a more magical approach to the type of adventures they get involved in. So the two specifics, magic and family, are what is going to set this off.

We do in fact have a reason for this twelve-part thing — there's a reason it's not four-part this time — and I leave it up to the imagination of the readers what the next logical step in the **Vision's** and **Wanda's** relationship might be. I'm glad, I'd like to say, to be moving them in this sort of direction. **Roy Thomas** created the **Vision**, and set up the relationship between him and **Wanda**, and then didn't take it much beyond frustrated love. I came along next on the book and decided to bite the bullet, and got them married. Since then, most of the situations in-

volving them have been super-heroic ones — the **Vision** trying to take over the world or **Wanda** finding out about her parents, this sort of thing. But the relationship between **Wanda** and the **Vision** hasn't progressed much since then. And I'm interested in moving their characters.

I would say also, having just said that, that **Roger Stern** bit the bullet, and took the control crystal out of the **Vision's** head, and started him talking like a human being. One of the things that I'm quite happy to pick up on from **Roger** is that, that the **Vision** is going to become more human. Everybody thinks of him as being an android with programmed brain patterns and so forth, and what I have shifted the emphasis to is that he is in fact a human consciousness who has a prosthetic body. Some people have artificial arms, some have artificial legs — he has artificial everything. But there's still a human consciousness in there, even if it was derived from **Simon Williams**, etcetera etcetera — and he is making a subtle but very distinct transition from reserved, cold, unassuming android, to artificial human. And that's going to be fun to play with.

Since you've been talking about the Vision, let's talk about Wanda for a bit. Currently, the anti-mutant sentiment in the Marvel Universe is on a considerable upswing. So what does this mean for Wanda?

She takes her share of abuse, but it is not a major theme of this series. As a mutant member of the Marvel Universe, she can't ignore it, but I'm not planning any anti-mutant rallies in **Leonia**. They already burned down her house. In the first issue, **Wanda** and the **Vision** decide that they do not want to run away from their problems. They want another house in **Leonia**, and they're going to get it. But they're also going to try to educate their neighbors to the fact that they're not terrible people. Again, in keeping with the



humanistic approach to the whole thing, that's the way I want to go with it. I would rather see **Wanda** win over at least a small town, who would allow her and the **Vision** to live there. There's no way she's going to win over all of America. That's something **Chris** is dealing with over in **THE X-MEN**.

We are going to be guest-starring **Magneto** in the book. Obviously, as these changes take place in her life, **Wanda** is going to want to share them with her father and her brother. **Magneto**, **Quicksilver**, everybody will be showing up in this book at some point in time. But again, the major changes that are taking place with her have to do with the changes that are taking place in the whole relationship.

It sounds like **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** is going to be a fairly well-populated book.

It is. For what is theoretically a two-member book, it's going to look more like a small team. Basically, in any series that you pick up, you say "Who are the supporting characters, who are the people he knows, where do we go from here?" And you generally tell stories about the hero, and when necessary, you bring in guest-stars, you bring in references to the past. In this one, who they know is one of the most important things going. As I've said before, they know just about everyone in the entire Marvel Universe, and I would expect just about that entire cast of characters to show up at one point or another. I want to surround them with their friends and their enemies. It's a family strip. In a very weird way, it's a family strip.

Relative to the years and years of experience **Al Migrom** and **Joe Sinnott** have had, **Richard Howell** and **Andy Mushynsky**, while not exactly newcomers, are relatively new. You probably haven't seen any of **Andy's** inking over **Richard** yet, but you've seen **Richard's** pencils on the first issue. How do you like working with him?

Richard is an old friend. We got to know each other when he was editing "The *Djinn*" for another company way back when, and I was writing it. He's now shifted from being my boss to being my collaborator, but that's the way the comic book business is. **Richard** has always been a stand-up guy, very fair-minded and a good person to work with, the same way **Al Migrom** has always been.

The first issue of **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** is everything I expected it to be. I'm very happy with it. I'll tell you quite frankly, not only am I convinced that **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** is going to be the one that surprises people, but I think we're going to be a big hit. I'm real pleased with all this stuff I've been



rambling on about, in the story, and I think **Richard** does a hell of a job on it. There's always a year when people "discover" **Barry Smith** or **Frank Miller** or **Howard Chaykin** or **Alan Moore** or whatever, and I think people are going to discover **Richard Howell** this year. So much the better for everyone involved.

To finish up, a general question: A lot of people consider you to be one of the, if not the top comics writer of the Seventies. And here you are back at Marvel, and it's 1985. So, do you have any reflections on Marvel in the Eighties?

Well, Marvel in the Eighties is a lot better than Marvel in the Seventies. Marvel in the Eighties is now, basically, what I always wanted the company to be. It's run much more like a real publishing company now. Having gone away and done stuff for other publishing companies in other areas, I know real well how publishing companies work elsewhere. Comic books have finally come up to that same standard.

So it's very comfortable for me to work here again.

I have always loved comics. I love to do other things besides comics, and there's never going to be a time in my life when I only do one thing, whether it's comics or something besides comics. But the stuff is fresh to me again after eight years of not doing it, and it's fun to be doing it, because basically, I love comics.

BULLETIN! Hold the presses! We've got late-breaking news we just can't wait until next issue to reveal! **Steve** just let slip that the **Vision** and **Wanda** are going to have a baby in their Limited Series! That's right — the most unusual couple in the Marvel Universe is going to become the most unusual family! Break out the champagne!

Whew! We now return you to your regularly scheduled **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**, already in progress, and pre-recorded for this time zone!

TAKE A CHANCE ON A . . .

LONGSHOT

by Steve Ringgenberg

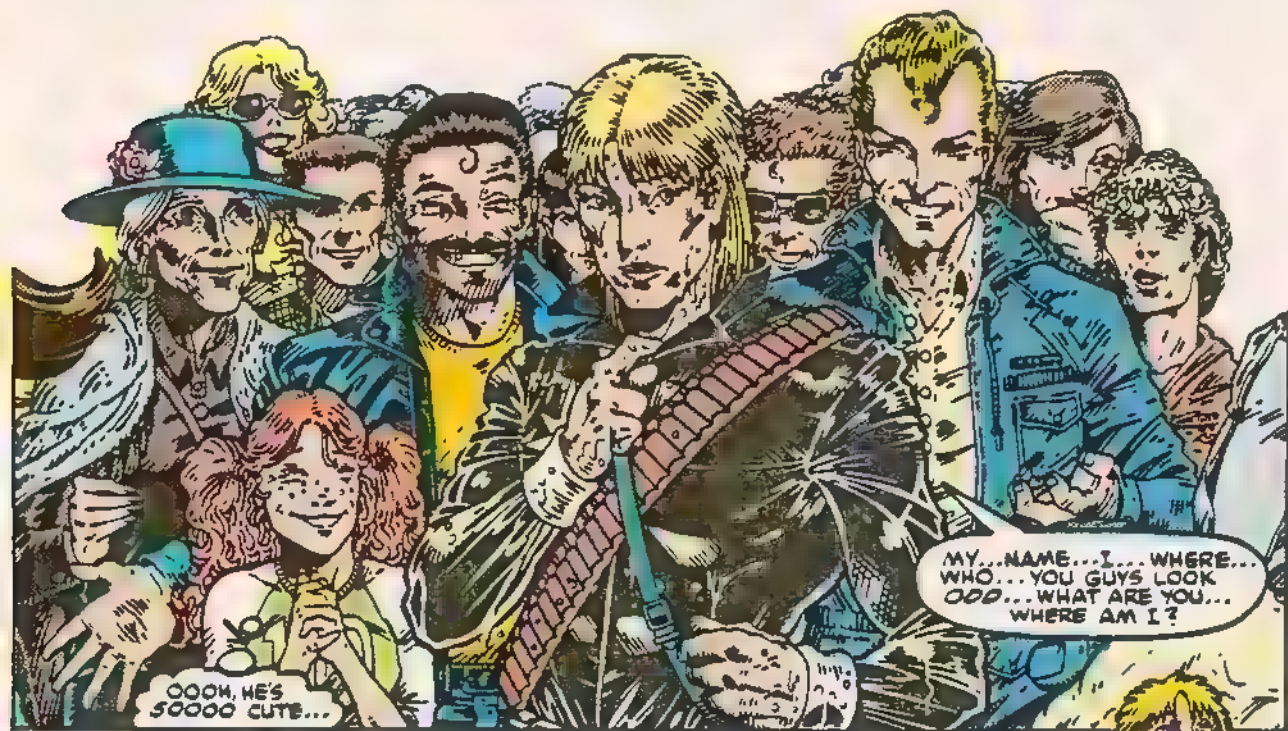
So, you think you've seen every possible different type of super hero, every possible super-power? Are you ready for something *completely* different? Then how about an existential super hero? If that doesn't exactly push your thrill button, then how about a protagonist from another dimension who's absurdly, ridiculously lucky, but who has to deal with all the consequences of his outrageous luck? As you may have already guessed, **LONGSHOT**, a new six issue Limited Series written by Ann Nocenti, penciled by Art Adams, inked by Whilce Portacio and edited by Louise Simonson, is not easily classifiable. It's safe to say that **LONGSHOT** doesn't resemble anything that's gone

before it. "**LONGSHOT**," states Ann, "is the idea of stripping someone of everything that they are," an idea she freely admits she borrowed from the existentialists. "I never read comics," she continues, "so the idea of a hero to me was different. I couldn't think of it in terms of a 'super hero' hero. I thought of it more as a conceptual hero."

"Not having a comic book background, I tend to come up with the metaphysics before I come up with the characters. I knew that I wanted to deal with the metaphysics of luck. It was a concept that interested me . . . what luck is, what probability is, how you could shift probabilities towards yourself. What are the repercussions of that? So, I did a character centered around that idea . . . **Longshot** has access to probabilities and luck. He's

lucky, he's miraculous in a way . . . he was born with this talent to have access to being lucky, and the problem is that he finds out that there's a flip side to luck. There are repercussions. If you pull probabilities towards yourself, you're probably taking them away from other people, so it's actually something he shouldn't even be doing."

Another, even more fascinating aspect of **Longshot's** mystical powers is his ability to read the psychic imprint left behind on material objects: "**Longshot** can read an object, tell where it's been, where it's going to go. He can tell the future in the present in an object, tell who made it, tell if somebody is going to die by it someday. It depends . . . if you picked up a hammer and used it to bang nails every day and





Longshot went to read it, he may not read much off of it, but if it was used to kill somebody, that would leave a bigger psychic imprint . . . even if somebody held an object and cried over it, he would feel that too. If someone's emotional or intense enough around an object, they'll imprint it stronger, so he can read that."

But, even with his amazing powers, **Longshot** starts his adventures as a total mystery, even to himself. **Ann** describes him as: "a clean slate. He has no memories, no past, no name, no nothing . . . In a sense, what I was trying to do was strip somebody down to where he had none of the crutches that we normally have. Memory, in a way, is a crutch, or your name, or what you believe you are." So, **Longshot's** odyssey begins with some very basic questions: Who is he? Why is he

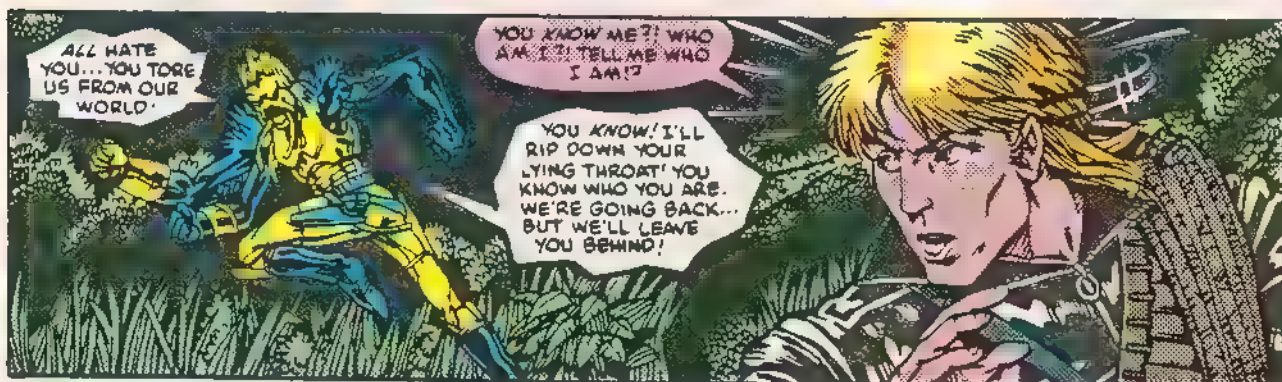
here? Ultimately, he goes on a quest for his past and finds it in search of him

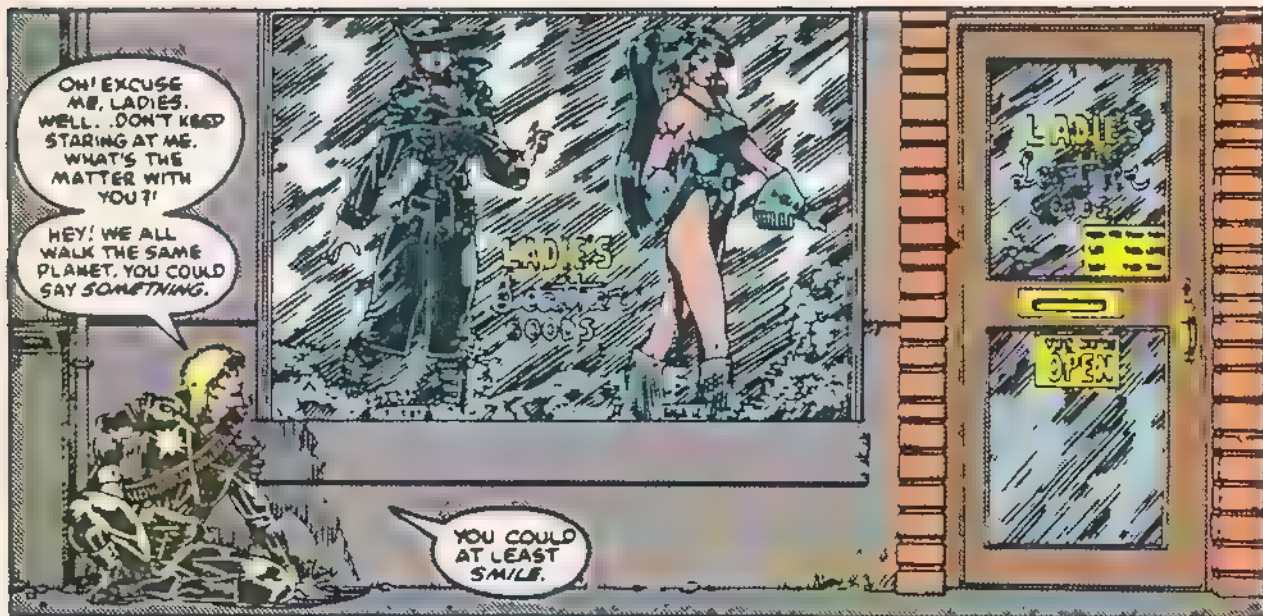
But, even before **Longshot's** mysterious past catches up with him, he'll begin to get vague inklings of its presence: "He has flashbacks and ghost images of a past that keeps creeping up on him. He'll touch an object and it'll remind him of something. There's an imprint of his mind still in his brain and it's slowly coming back . . . but, it's so subtle, I don't really bang anything over anybody's head, so I don't know if people will get any of this stuff"

As **Ann** explains it: "**Longshot** comes from another dimension, and he drags a whole cast of interdimensional beings with him. They get stuck between dimensions so they're neither here nor there" Some of these interdimensional beings pursue **Longshot** through-

out the Limited Series, but they are only a small part of the cast of dozens of bizarre supporting characters whom **Longshot** meets during his strange odyssey. The villains are obviously among the most memorable characters in the series, as attested by **Ann's** observation: "**Chris Claremont** saw a picture of one of the characters and we've decided to have her join the **Brotherhood of Evil Mutants**, so she'll actually be in the **X-Men** before **Longshot's** even out."

One of the oddest characters is also one of the first ones you'll meet: "There's this little puppy who's his first friend and who is a magic magnet. The longer he stays on this world, the more magic he draws into him, so every issue he changes and evolves and gets bigger and bigger and bigger" The first human supporting character you encounter is a crazed survivalist living in upstate New York, which is where **Longshot** just happens to pop into our dimension **Ann** describes **Longshot's** human mentor as "extremely paranoid, and believes the world is going to blow up any minute." Because **Longshot** hasn't an inkling of how to cope with human society, the survivalist takes him into his shelter and sets about correcting his abysmal ignorance **Longshot**, literally, "has to learn everything all over again," for instance: "He doesn't know what money is. Somebody tells him to get some money, but he doesn't even know what it is." **Longshot** tries to remedy his poor cash flow situation, but because of his inexperience, he takes the advice of the survivalist, who, of course, gives him paranoid advice. After encountering this looney tune in the first issue, "**Longshot** acts off of paranoid information . . . which is based in fact, but ultimately paranoid, so he gets himself into trouble trying to rob Con Ed." As if that wasn't bad enough, the second issue introduces **Longshot** to the entity called **Jinx**, so named for reasons that quickly become obvious. **Jinx** is **Longshot's** polar opposite: "Someone who's totally pessimistic, who just wants to die





The whole issue he keeps trying to kill himself, and **Longshot** is trying to keep this guy from killing himself and teach him that life's worth living . . ."

So, after trying to rob Con Ed, **Longshot** next tries to make an honest living as a stuntman, which brings **Ricochet Rita** into his life. **Ricochet Rita**, says her creator, is "an exaggerated version of **Longshot**. She's a rodeo baby who really can't exist outside of a spotlight . . . she thrives on the spotlight, so she becomes a stunt-girl." Working as a stuntman enables **Longshot** to use his luck-drawing power in a unique way — he and Rita, "do million dollar, high-risk stunts that no one else is suicidal enough to do."

Because of his unique abilities, and the kind of power he gives off, **Longshot** quickly comes to the attention of Marvel's Sorcerer Supreme, **Dr. Strange**. **Strange** enters the story when he notices "people of incredible mystical power popping into our dimension." Intrigued, **Dr. Strange** "tracks it to its source and becomes interested in **Longshot** because he recognizes that this person is in the middle of this phenomenon of luck." **Longshot's** luck drawing powers also bring him to the attention of **Spider-Man** and the **She-Hulk**.

Bringing all of these characters to vivid life is **Art Adams**, a young penciler whose work on **LONGSHOT** is bound to make him a fan favorite. Although all of the concepts for **LONGSHOT** had been laid down by **Ann** by the time **Art** was brought in on the project, his sheer talent and youthful enthusiasm quickly made an impact on **LONGSHOT**. "What **Art** did," says collaborator **Ann**, "was give **Longshot** the face and the body language

. . . exactly the way I pictured it, but to a point where I could evolve it further once I looked at the picture. The whole project probably would have gone in a different direction if it was another artist because **Art** also added a lot of good spirit to this project. He was as spirited as I was, because it was brand new for both of us to be creating something . . . there's not enough that you can say about what an artist adds when he finally draws the image, because the image starts to talk to you. He was just wonderful on the creative side."

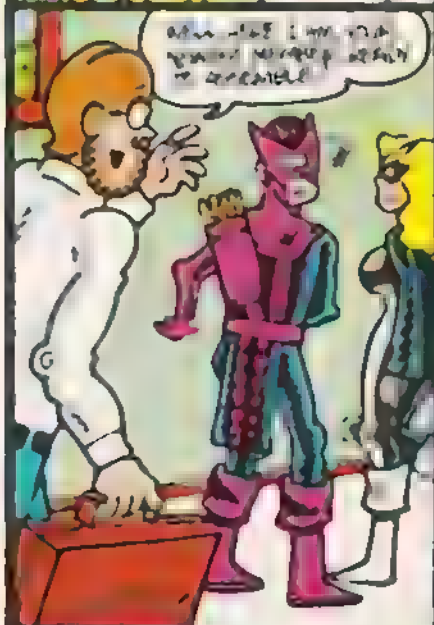
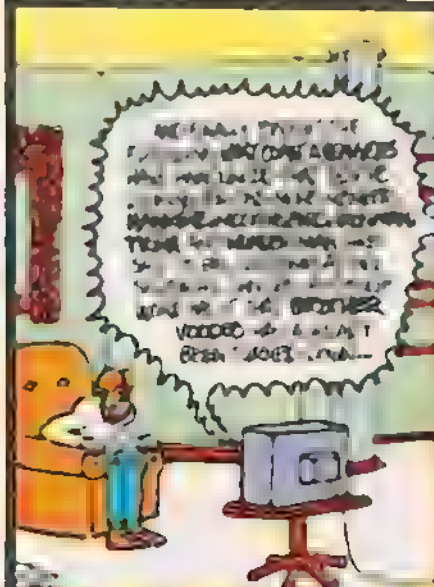
Although he has been laboring behind the scenes for the last eighteen months, lavishing care and detail on the pages for **LONGSHOT**, **Art Adams** is largely an unknown quantity to Marvel fans. The bulk of his pre-**LONGSHOT** work consists of a few covers and a story he wrote and drew for **BIZARRE ADVENTURES** that he would rather the fans forgot about. Happily, however, **Art** is much more satisfied with the work he did on **LONGSHOT**. **Art's** inker on the book is **Whilce Portacio**, a name that Marvel fans might recognize from the credits of **ALIEN LEGION**. **Whilce** will be inking most issues of **LONGSHOT**, although **Art** will be handling his own inks for the last issue. And, in order to make the last issue even more special, **Art** confided that he intends to do a painting for the cover.

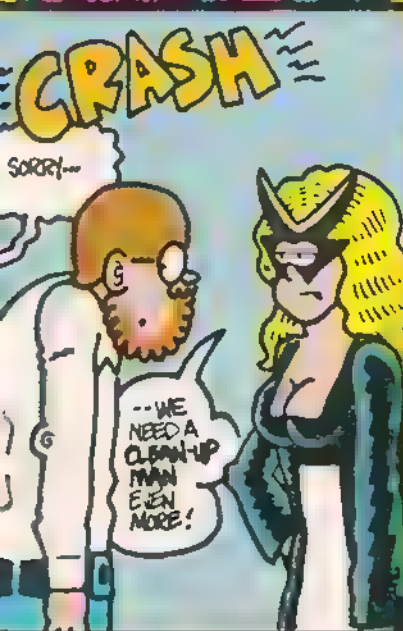
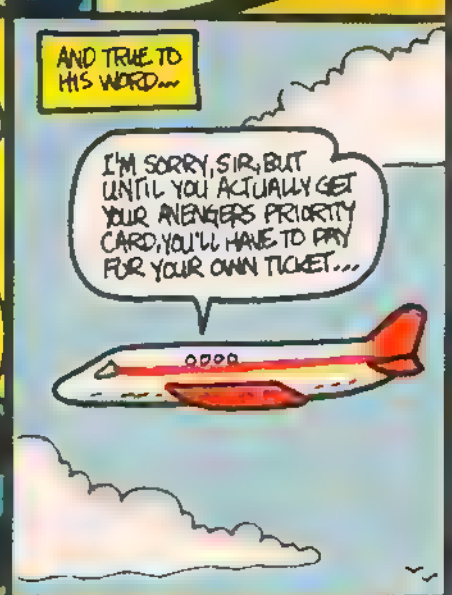
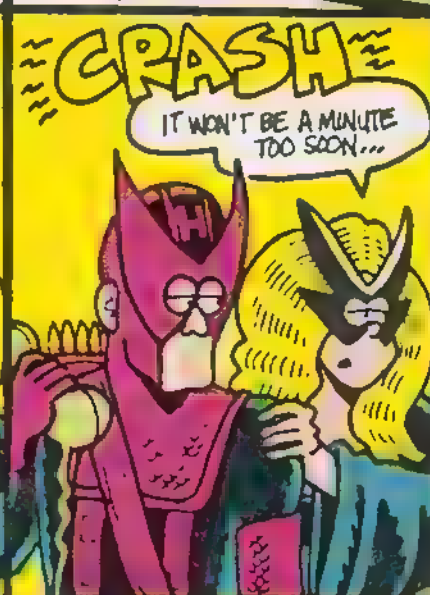
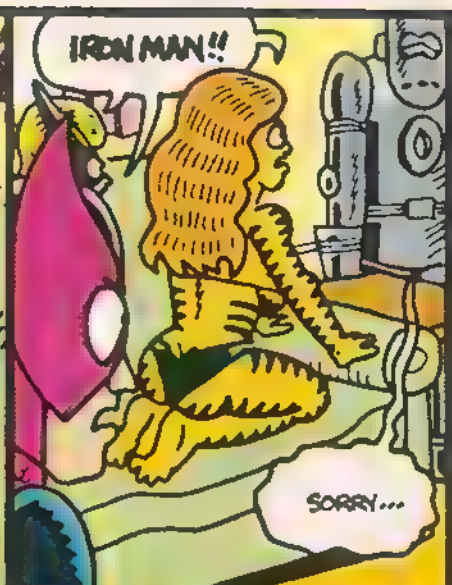
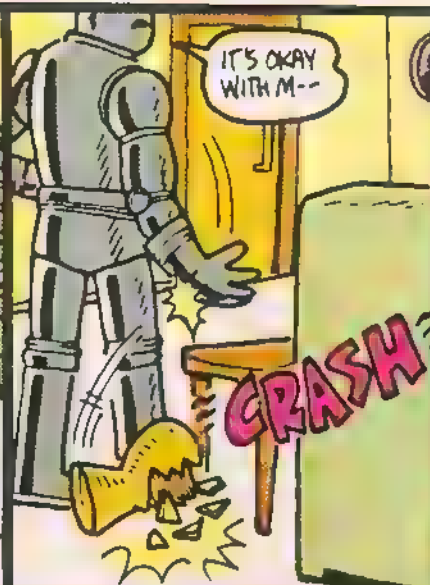
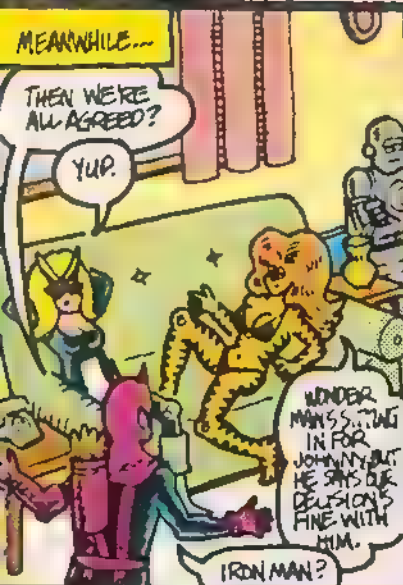
Given its complexity and uniqueness, a project like **LONGSHOT** does not simply happen. A top notch editor is always necessary to bring it from the idea stages to its publication. In this case, **Ann** is unsparing in her praise of editor **Louise Simonson**. "**Weezy** was essential in this whole project be-

cause I tend to throw lots of muddy concepts at her and she would sort them out for me. She had insight into what I was doing that I couldn't see myself . . . She's a brilliant editor. She would ask the right questions. She knows how to put her finger on it . . . She would focus things for me."

Comics fans who are looking for a daringly different kind of story should gamble on **LONGSHOT** — the odds are high that they'll find it a winner.







The One™

by Dwight Jon Zimmerman

Rick Veitch has written and drawn one of the most unusual and fascinating, to say nothing of topical, Limited Series ever to appear under the Epic banner. Entitled **THE ONE**, the bi-monthly adventure examines the terror, tragedy and unimaginable consequences that occur in a corrupting struggle for ultimate world power that begins with a nuclear war between the United States and Russia.

In the first issue, we discover that the year is 1988 on an Earth very similar to ours. It is a world where super heroes exist only in the pages of comic books and people's imaginations. And it is a world where tensions between the United States and Russia have never been greater.

It is those tensions that the bizarre **Itchy Itch** is determined to exploit. "He's sort of a **Howard Hughes**-like industrialist," **Rick** said. "He lives in a garret and walks around in a bathrobe all the time. At the same time, he controls about one-third of the world's industrial capacity. He provokes a confrontation between the Russians and the Americans in the hope of cleaning up in the stock market. It's a little drastic, but he figures that by scaring everybody, causing them to believe that a nuclear war is going to happen, they'll all handle their finances with less control. Now, **Itchy Itch** doesn't really believe that the Russians and Americans will fire their missiles. The consequences are just too great. So he pushes the crisis to the limit. And

what happens is something that **Itchy** didn't count on."

That something is nuclear war. But, as the rocket-powered warheads streak through the stratosphere, something incredible occurs. Most of mankind suddenly falls into a bizarre coma called **The Big Sleep**. It is during this "sleep" that a strange, shapeless energy creature possessing unimaginable power is created: **the One**. "He is a spontaneous manifestation of the World-Mind—a direct result of man's ability to destroy himself," **Rick** said. "Compelled by his creator's overwhelming desire for self-preservation in the face of the impending atomic doom, **the One** immediately attacks the nuclear missiles and neutralizes the uranium by changing its atomic structure. In so doing, **the One** also obtains the raw material he needs to create for himself a super-human form.

He will need this corporeal form, because as the series unfolds, **the One** must save mankind from even greater destruction at the hands of what ultimately proves to be an even deadlier threat: super heroes!

How can super heroes be a threat? The answer to that lies in the most restricted corridors of the American and Russian governments. When they discover that their missiles are all duds, both world powers, instead of being relieved, are more worried than ever. Because in their minds, this catastrophe has created an even greater crisis.

"There is a power vacuum," **Rick**

said. "And the first nation that can develop the next generation of weaponry will be the nation that can take over the world."

As the President of the United States discovers, the U.S. secretly possesses that next generation. It is **Project Superior**. And it is a program so experimental, so controversial and so secret that, ever since its inception sixty years ago, all the U.S. presidents have been unaware of it. But now the directors of the project decide that even though their latest subjects have not been perfected, the President must be told.

The President weighs the risks and decides that, for America's safety, **Project Superior** must be made front-line active immediately.

What has **Project Superior** created? The super heroes **Starrion 1** and **Starrion 2**. **Charles** and **Amelia**, as they are also known, have been told by the scientists and directors that they are brother and sister. But their true past has been kept secret. **Charles** and **Amelia** are, in fact, the latest in a long line of genetic experiments designed to create super-powered humans. And as **Starrion 1** and **Starrion 2** quickly demonstrate, they possess super speed, strength, agility, near-total invulnerability and genius intelligence.

When the Russians discover America's effort, they embark on a frantic crash program to develop their own super hero. In their search for a rapid way to do so, they scour the old documents they captured from the Nazis

during World War II They find secret papers about bizarre nutrition experiments and immediately incorporate these studies into their own program which creates the Russian counterpart to the new American threat: the super hero **Bog** Stronger than the American super heroes and possessing even greater invulnerability, the giant **Bog** appears to be a truly invincible fighting machine But the Russians soon discover that **Bog** possesses severe defects **Bog's** metabolism is so accelerated, he must eat his own body-weight in food every twenty-four hours And **Bog** grows so fast that he's in almost constant pain. But the deadliest problem is that **Bog** is uncontrollable a berserker who makes the **Hulk** look like a pussycat

During this period of super hero development, the U.S. and U.S.S.R. are still at war But it is like the "Phoney War," the lull that immediately preceded the German offensive against France in World War II Neither side wants to use its conventional forces The leaders on both sides believe that the new biological technology has created the ultimate weapon, so strong that it will nullify the use of regular tanks and battleships. One field experiment lends credence to this belief on the American side when one of the American super heroes tears a tank apart with his bare hands

Thus, what the President and his Russian counter-part plan to do is throw their super heroes onto the field and let them slug it out until one or the

other wins. To the victor will go the spoils, but the victor might not be the country that created the super hero, it might be the super hero, himself!

During their training, the super heroes will discover some terrible truths about themselves and the governments that created them. They will realize that they, themselves, and not their countries, are now the greatest power in the world and that mankind needs them but they have no need for mankind

Things get stickier and stickier, not only because of the new and disrupting presence of the super heroes, but also because of a more diabolical threat, the antithesis of the **One** . . . the **Other**. "The **Other** was created from the World-Mind at the same time as the **One** The **Other** is the negative of the **One**," Rick said. "He personifies all that is demonic in the human race. In his dealing with men, he is able to bring out these negative qualities in them. The **Other** is the direct conflict for the **One** There will be an incredible conflict between the **One** and the **Other**, but I don't want to go into detail about it."

In the meantime, the **One** is learning how to adapt to life on a human plane The **One** adopts a secret identity and falls in with a group of artists and writers who are trying to cope with the upheavals in society caused by the advent of the super heroes. "At first, the **One** is seen as a man of mystery," Rick said. "He's vague, strange-looking and content to sample the pleasures and pain of human existence with

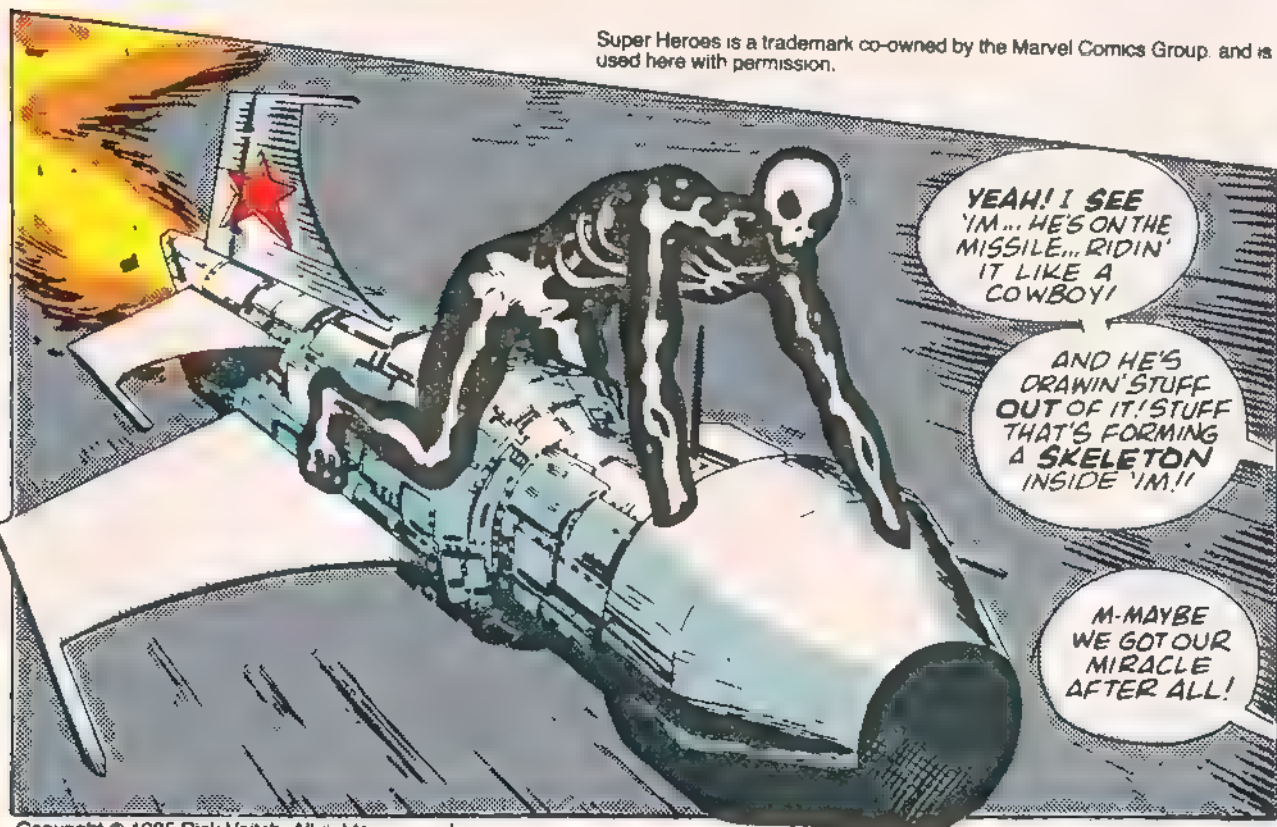
his new-found friends." But this idyllic existence soon ends and the **One** becomes an active participant in the developing war of super heroes. Eventually "the **One** will be revealed to be a tragic character who loves the human race but whose destiny is to initiate its complete transformation," Rick said

Rick's excitement for **THE ONE** started years ago when he first began developing the idea. "I've always wanted to do a super hero, since I grew up on them," Rick said. "I think that they are one of the most potent archetypes of the 20th Century. They are like the ancient gods of Greece and Rome who show us their strengths and foibles by acting them out The difference is that modern super heroes have an added dimension They point out the potential of the human race to evolve and transform itself What I'm doing with **THE ONE** is extrapolating on the possibility that technology could create superior human beings, and that the first ones will be rather primitive, almost failures. The lesson that man has to learn is that he should be careful what he creates."

In addition to Rick's story, **THE ONE** will also include a one-page gag strip called "Puzz Fundles" by Rick Grimes "It's a really crazy strip," Rick said. "And it has a sheer oddballness that should appeal to people who liked such films as *Eraserhead* and music by *Captain Beefheart*"

Altogether, Rick promises that this Limited Series will truly be "The Last Word in Super Heroes"

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YEAH! I SEE
'IM... HE'S ON THE
MISSILE... RIDIN'
IT LIKE A
COWBOY!

AND HE'S
DRAWIN' STUFF
OUT OF IT! STUFF
THAT'S FORMING
A SKELETON
INSIDE 'IM!!

M-MAYBE
WE GOT OUR
MIRACLE
AFTER ALL!

SQUADRON SUPREME

by Ken Hart

"They're the best there is at what they do!" "Comics were never like this!" "Their world will never be the same again!" Think you've heard it all before? Think again!

Debuting this May will be an exciting and thought-provoking Limited Series featuring the super-team from an alternate Earth, the **Squadron Supreme**. Mark Gruenwald will write the series, with Bob Hall and John Beatty handling the art duties. Ralph Macchio will edit. The title is scheduled for twelve issues (with a double-sized premiere) but favorable reader reaction may lead to further stories.

Mark explains that, on this other world, the members of the **Squadron Supreme** "are the only super heroes

around. Anybody who's anybody joins that group. One of the things we'll see is that the ranks keep swelling as they discover more and more heroes." Imagine, if you will, the **Avengers** recruiting every super hero that pops up.

The series begins a week after the **Squadron's** appearance in **THE DEFENDERS** a couple of years ago. In that story, the **Squadron**, under the control of the **Overmind**, attacked America and much of the world. "The premise is, in a nutshell," says Mark, "that the **Squadron Supreme** decides to do what no other group of super-beings has done before, and that is to actually improve the world. Most of our super-teams," such as the **Avengers**, "exist to react to menaces that are out there, that are beyond the scope of traditional law-enforcement agencies.

They never attack the disease, what makes crime happen, only the symptoms, crime itself."

The **Squadron Supreme**, on the other hand, will "try to solve all of the world's problems" and create a utopia on Earth. They'll "go out and live up to the potential of their superhuman powers. This really hasn't been done before, to my knowledge, in comics." Mark says that the group, in making this decision, feels "unbounded by cultural imperative, meaning that there has always been an unwritten law preventing super heroes from turning the culture into something that it isn't. "They're *all* a part of this culture. Who's to say if it's right or wrong?" The **Squadron** feels that it has certain powers, so why not use them as they judge best? Mark says

MEANWHILE SOMEWHERE OVER PENNSYLVANIA

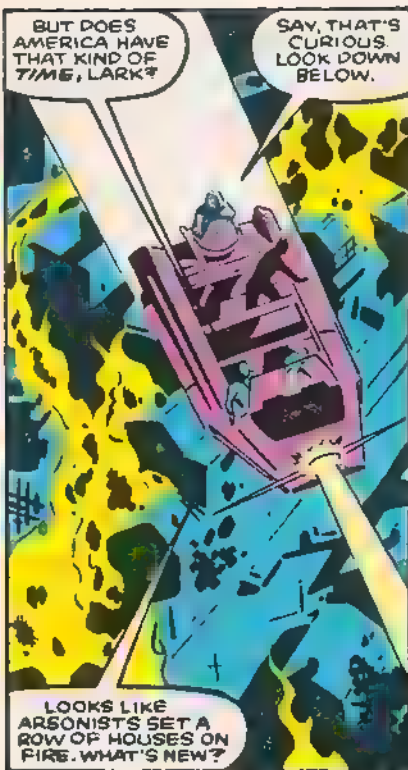


IT'S UNLIKE YOU TO BE SO QUIET, GOLDEN ARCHER. DID OUR TOUR OF AMERICA GET TO YOU LIKE IT'S GOTTEN TO ME?

I'LL SAY IT HAS. WE'VE SEEN MOST MAJOR EASTERN CITIES BLACKED OUT. THE BREAKDOWN OF ALL MASS TRANSIT AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS. PEOPLE SCROUNGING FOR A MEAL. LOOTING SPREES EVERYWHERE.

YOU'RE AN EXPERT IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS, NIGHTHAWK. TELL ME HOW DID THINGS GET SO BAD SO FAST? HOW IN BLAZES ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT?

I HAVE NO EASY ANSWERS



that he'll be leaving approximately a one-month gap between the events of each issue, so readers will be able to better see the progress (or lack thereof) of the Squadron's goal. By the time the series is completed, events on this alternate world will have chronologically caught up with those on Marvel-Earth.

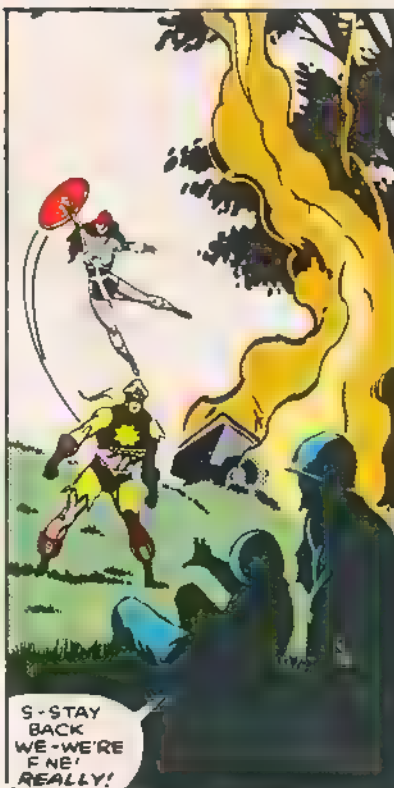
Because of the events chronicled in the DEFENDERS tale, "the world is in a sorry state, particularly America." In this reality, "America conquered the world" and the consequence of the Squadron's recent destructive acts is "that no one trusts America anymore . . . the world's in chaos at the start of the series." The Squadron Supreme must now choose whether to simply clean up the planet and restore things to the way they were, or to go beyond that. Their decision raises disturbing civil and ethical questions.

In the first issue, the Squadron goes on TV and promises the people "that in return for their cooperation and support, they will solve all of the world's problems." They're going to start with America, and use the results as a master plan for the rest of the world. As Mark describes, "There's a food crisis at the beginning — they solve that." The banks have collapsed, resulting in an economic crisis worse than the Depression — they solve that. "They're going to rid the world of war, crime, disease, social injustice . . . at least they're going to try."

Nevertheless, the Squadron Supreme series "doesn't involve them battling . . . a social cause of the month." Mark promises plenty of

spectacular superheroics. "That constitutes the background action of what they're doing," and they'll continue to work on the "utopia scenario" in that month between each issue. Mark says he'll need all twelve issues to solve the problems described in the first.

"Now the issue this 'utopia scenario' raises is this: individual rights vs. the good of society. In order to solve various problems, they have to take control out of the hands of the people, and keep it for themselves. For example, when they outlaw war, the only way to really do that is . . . to get rid of the weapons of war. It's fairly easy for them to force nuclear disarmament, but there are other ways to fight wars than with nuclear weapons.



So they have to disarm everybody. That's the only way they can prevent war. And, of course, this violates civil rights as we know them in America today," since the right to bear arms is guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. "So if stopping war is a good idea, which they believe it is, then in order to accomplish that for the greater good, they have to step on the individual's rights.

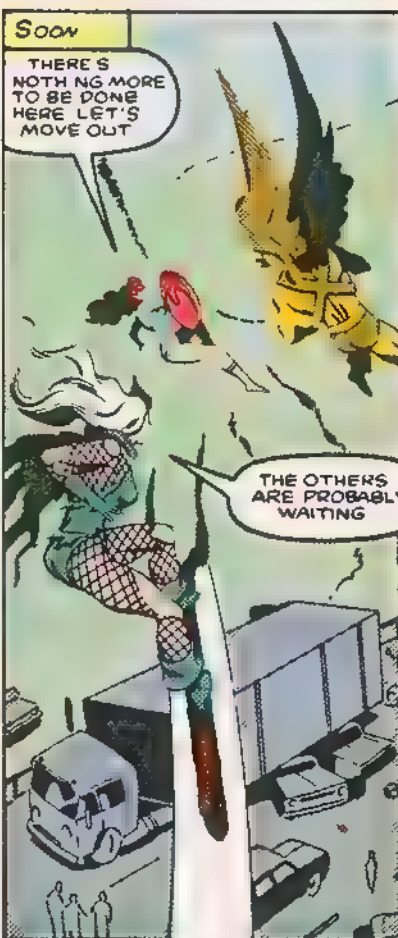
"In order for them to create a utopia," Mark continues, "they have to exercise their power over society, over the people. At a certain point, I hope the readers ask themselves, 'Is it right for this elite group of the super-powerful to do all this to the world?'" The Squadron was not elected by the people, but its members feel that what

they're doing is right. "They're doing it not for personal gain, but for the world." Not everyone agrees. Many people tell the group it has no right to do this.

"The Squadron is faced with choices that most super heroes have never had to cope with before, because they've never tried to do what the Squadron is doing. And the thing about doing this 'utopia scenario' . . . is that there are no half-way measures. You're either going to do it, and you're going to go all-out and attack all of these problems and get to their roots" or you're not going to attempt it at all.

The Squadron Supreme begins the series with twelve members: Hyperion, Nighthawk, the Whizzer, Dr. Spectrum, Power Princess, Amphibion, Golden Archer, Tom Thumb, Blue Eagle, Lady Lark, Arcanna and Nuke. Mark suspiciously hints that some members will leave and others will join the Squadron's ranks before the series concludes.

Mark says he will concentrate heavily on two of the heroes in each issue, focusing on "their interrelationship within the group." The first issue will spotlight Hyperion and Nighthawk. The Squadron's program to reshape the world is Hyperion's suggestion. He represents the belief of "the greatest good for the greatest number,"





says **Mark Hyperion** meets opposition from **Nighthawk** who, in this reality, had been President of the United States before the **Overmind** affair forced him out of office. **Nighthawk** "firmly believes in America as it was with them not interfering too much with the American judicial, legislative, political and economic system." He tries to sway the **Squadroners** from carrying out the 'utopia scenario' and have them "simply repair the world from the damage that they caused," and then leave things as they were.

As mentioned earlier, there is opposition outside of the group, as well. The American people, remembering that the **Squadron** supported the old government's reign of terror, are suspicious of everything it attempts, even the **Squadron's** food distribution program. When the group begins confiscating guns, the people's mistrust grows.

On the other hand, when the super villains of this world "get wind of the behavior modification program," they start banding together. "For many people (and readers), 'the villains will be the heroes when they attack the **Squadron**,' since the villains iron-

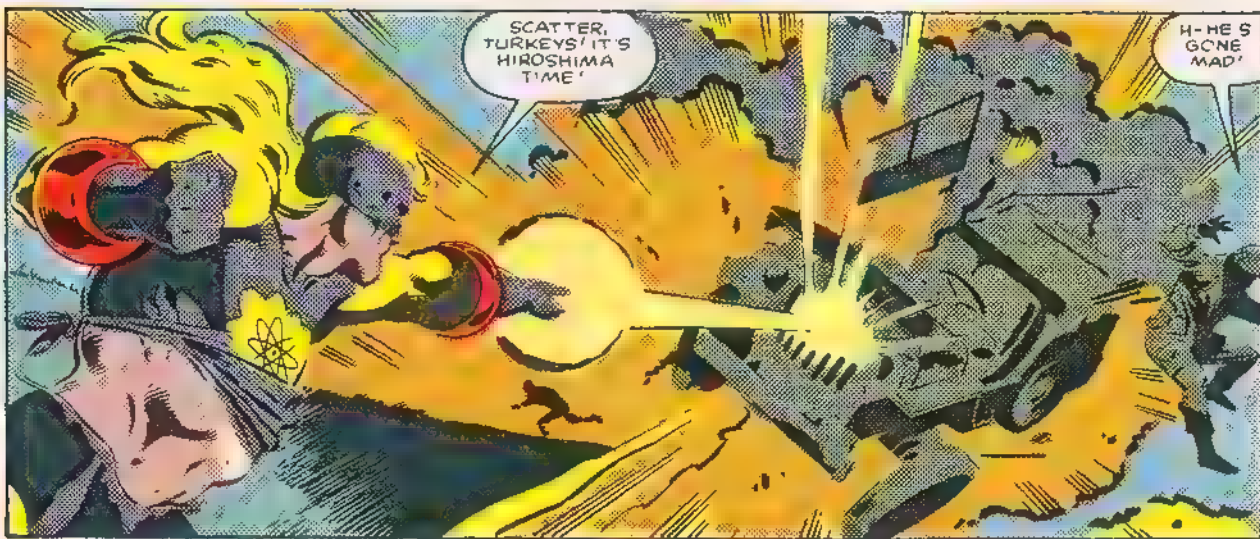
cally are representing free will and the rights of the individual.

Since he's the only writer handling the **Squadron's** appearances right now, **Mark** has more creative room in which to work, and he says he'll be portraying their powers realistically. **Hyperion**, for example, has **Hulk-level** strength, and "he's the strongest guy on Earth, but, in issue #1, when their satellite is falling out of the sky, not even he can tow it back up into orbit." Their unity makes up for any limits their powers may have. **The Whizzer's** speed limit is the speed of sound, and when he achieves that on land, "he shatters all of the windows. He gives friction burns to everyone who's standing near him. People are blown away by the sonic boom." **Mark** has no qualms about imposing these limits: the speed of sound "is plenty fast for me." He doesn't view setting limits as being restricting. "It's liberating in that you know exactly what they can do, and it's their character that helps them work around those limits." **Mark** himself created three of the **Squadroners** — **Arcanna**, **Power Princess** and **Nuke** — for the **Overmind** story.

The **Squadron's** world has "connections with Marvel-Earth as we know it. There are **Skrulls** in this universe. **Power Princess** comes from Utopia Isle, which is the equivalent of **Attilan**. **The Kree** came down to this Earth" and created what we would call the **Inhumans**, except they never discovered the **Terrigen Mists**, which gave our **Inhumans** such diversification. Instead, these beings simply became the perfect race, just as the **Kree** had intended.

Mark says that we may recognize a couple of the villains in the series, and there will be "a time-travelling villain that will look familiar to some." He adds that there may be a very slight, but direct crossover with Marvel-Earth at some point in the series.

He hopes that the public will show enough interest in the characters and ideas behind the **SQUADRON SUPREME** series to warrant a continuation. "I sure would like to tell their further adventures after they're through with this particular period." From the sound of it, **THE SQUADRON SUPREME** is going to be like nothing you've ever seen before — you can be sure of that!



The Hero is gone, but the story lives forever!

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CAPTAIN MARVEL



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THE MARVEL AGE — 1968 (Part II)

by Adam Phillips

When last we looked, we'd covered the 1968 Marvel comics from **THE AVENGERS** to **DAREDEVIL**. Now let's jump right back in, to look at **THE FANTASTIC FOUR**, **NOT BRAND ECCH**, **SGT. FURY**, and **THE SILVER SURFER**, as well as **STRANGE TALES** and the two new series that spun off of it, **DR. STRANGE** and **NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.** Ready? Good!

THE FANTASTIC FOUR started 1968 off in the midst of some big changes. **Sue Richards** had taken a leave of absence, because of her pregnancy, and the **Thing** had become hostile to the world, thanks to the **Mad Thinker's** sabotage of a machine intended to change him back to human form. Then the **Thinker** unleashed an android which proved too much for even the **Human Torch** and **Mister Fantastic** to handle! The **Thing**, regaining his senses, managed to slow the android down and keep **Sue Richards** from harm, giving **Reed** enough time to trap it in the **Negative Zone**. This battle made **Reed** decide that he and **Sue** should leave the team, at least until the baby was born. The point was moot, however, as the **Watcher** showed up to warn them that the **Silver Surfer** had gone on a rampage. **Reed** was forced to join the fight, since only his **Sonic Shark Missile** was powerful enough to slow the **Surfer** down enough so that the team could talk some sense into him! After the crossover with **DAREDEVIL** (detailed last month in Part One of this article), who should show up but... **Galactus**! The purple planet-eater was determined to reclaim the **Silver Surfer**, so that his herald could find him a planet of the type he needed to survive. While the **FF** fought off **Galactus's** robot **Punisher**, the **Surfer** hid in the sub-atomic **Microverse**. **Galactus**, threatening to chow down on the Earth, forced **Reed**, **Johnny** and **Ben** to seek the **Surfer** out. Travelling into the **Microverse**, the boys were attacked by **Psycho-Man** and the **Surfer** decided that to keep his friends safe, the only thing he could do was to return to Earth. The **FF** kept **Psycho-Man** busy while the **Surfer** escaped the **Microverse**, to serve **Galactus** one last time. After returning to Earth, **Reed** found a new way to change **Ben** back to human form—but no sooner had he done so, than the **Wizard**, wearing his super-powered **Wonder Gloves**, attacked! Without the **Thing's** strength the **FF** could barely stop the **Wizard**. But they managed, and in the wake of their victory,



the romance between **Johnny** and **Crystal** of the **Inhumans** inspired the ex-**Thing** to ask **Alicia Masters** to marry him. Unluckily, he had the **Wizard's** confiscated **Wonder Gloves** with him when he went to propose, and the electronic signals they gave out awakened an android in the **Mad Thinker's** abandoned lab. In order to protect himself and **Alicia** from the rampaging android, **Ben** was forced to don the **Wonder Gloves**—and the titanic surge of energy through his body turned the unlucky **Mr. Grimm** back into the **Thing**. While **Ben** was trying to cope with the tragedy of losing his human form once more, a letter from **Johnny's** college chum **Wyatt Wingfoot** brought the group to the southwest to face the terror of **Tomazooma**, the **Living Idol**! And then... the climactic moment had arrived—**Sue** and **Reed's** child was due! But the cosmic radiation in **Sue's** blood was threatening to kill both mother and child. **Reed** discovered that the element needed to save their lives was in the **Negative Zone**, and with that, a desperate mission began! In the **Zone** they met and battled **Annihilus**, whose weapon, the **Cosmic Control Rod**, the **FF** traded it for their freedom, but not before extracting the substance they needed to save **Sue** and the baby. And it worked! **Sue** and the baby (a boy!) were safe, but **Sue** was definitely not going to rejoin the team for some time. At the end of the year **Crystal** decided that she'd like to be **Sue's** replacement. **Mister Fantastic** was skeptical, until she proved her mettle in a spectacular battle with the **Wizard**! So the **Fantastic Four** were four again—as they faced the

perils '69 would bring (and I'm not talking about the **Mets**!)

Meanwhile, on the other side of sanity, **NOT BRAND ECCH** continued with its unique brand of parody, featuring such wacky comic milestones as the special "Love and Marriage" issue, lampooning romances between super heroes, the "all-origin" issue, with hilarious stories of the origins of the **Fantastical Four** and **Stupor-Man**, and tales of **Forbush-Man**, in which the pot-headed wonder attempted to join the **Revengees**, the **Echhe-Men** and **S.H.E.E.S.H.** but was turned down every time! Again, the artists and writers doing these stories were the regular Marvel creative staff. People such as **Stan Lee**, **Jack Kirby** and **Marie Severin** all contributed regularly, and humor comics have never been the same!

While all this went on, **Sergeant Fury** and his **Howling Commandos** continued to fight **World War Two**! They started out the year by rescuing the captured **Izzy Cohen**, as well as an important **Allied** scientist. In addition, they went on missions to the **Bavarian Alps**, the **Burmese Jungle** and met one of their most deadly enemies—the **Agent of 1,000 Faces**! **Dum-Dum Dugan** was almost court-martialed, but **Fury** managed to keep the **Howlers** together. At the end of the year, the **Howlers'** commanding officer, **Happy Sam Sawyer**, was being held prisoner by the **Nazis**... and only one group could save him (and I'm still not talking about the **Mets**!)

Another Marvel character who debuted in his own series in 1968 was the sky-spanning **Silver Surfer**. In his first issue, we learned of his origin, how he gave up his peaceful life on **Zenn-La** to become the herald of **Galactus**, and saved his planet from destruction. He was forced to leave the woman he loved, **Shalla Bal**, behind, and eventually came to Earth where he disobeyed **Galactus** and was imprisoned here as his punishment. The issue also featured the origin of the **Watcher**. The **Surfer** then thwarted an attempt at taking over the Earth by the lizard-like **Brotherhood of the Badoon**, who turned humanity against the **Surfer**. The final issue of **THE SILVER SURFER** for 1968 featured the debut of **Mephisto**, Lord of the Underworld, who was the **Surfer's** complete antithesis. Where the **Surfer** was pure good, the **Dark Lord** was totally evil. **Mephisto** tormented the **Surfer**, but could not claim the sky-ender's soul, thanks to the **Surfer's** purity.

Meanwhile, for the amazing **Spider-Man**, things were popping. He starred in Marvel's first black and white comics magazine, **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN**, where he stopped the crooked **Richard Raleigh** from winning a rigged election for district attorney. In the regular **SPIDER-MAN** title, he was still amnesiac, but managed to turn his back on **Doctor Octopus**, who had tricked him into a partnership. **J. Jonah Jameson** then hired the mighty **Ka-Zar** to hunt down **Spidey**, while **Harry Osborn**, wondering why his roommate hadn't shown up in a while, deduced that **Peter Parker** must have been kidnapped by **Spidey**! **Ka-Zar** did track down **Spidey**, but sensed **Spider-Man's** good qualities and refused to battle him. **J.J.J.**, still intent on the web-slinger's destruction, got a new **Spider-slayer** robot from **Professor Smythe**, and sent it after our hapless hero. **Spidey** managed to regain his memory while short-circuiting the **Spider-slayer**, and returned to his friends and family before **Harry** did anything rash, and just in time to see **Mary Jane Watson's** debut at the **Gloom Room A Go-Go**. The debut was almost a disaster, however — **MJ** was the unwitting accomplice of the **Brainwasher**, and the camera she carried was actually a hypnotic device, intended to capture the wills of some of the audience, including **Gwen Stacy's** father. The **Brainwasher** turned out to be the **Kingpin** in disguise, and while **Spidey** stopped his mad plan to use the hypnotized city officials, the battle didn't have an altogether happy ending. **Gwen** misunderstood **Peter's** attempts to free **Captain Stacy** from the **Kingpin's** control as assault, and angrily called off the romance. After a brief meeting with the magnificent **Medusa of the Inhumans**, who was trying to establish relations between her people and the human race,

Spidey was caught up in a donnybrook between the original **Vulture (Adrian Toomes)** and his successor (**Blackie Drago**). **Toomes** handily trounced **Drago**, and **Spidey** barely managed to survive **Toomes'** subsequent attack and stop the rampaging villain! For his efforts in saving innocents, **Spidey** was put in jail, and upon recovery found himself in the middle of a prison break, with **Captain Stacy** a hostage. He quelled the riot and saved **Stacy**, but one assumes it had more to do with respect for **Gwen's** father than civic duty. In the second **SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** magazine (in color this time) **Spidey** mixed it up with the **Green Goblin**, and brought him under control, only to face **Mysterio** in his regular series. Then **Peter Parker** journeyed to **Algiers** to disprove allegations that his parents were traitors to their country. He ran into the **Red Skull** during his travels, and found evidence that his parents had been, in fact, double agents, working for the American Government.

In **STRANGE TALES**, **Doctor Strange** was in the midst of an epic battle with **Yandroth**, scientist supreme from another dimension, who had kidnapped **Victoria Bentley**. He won through, and rescued **Victoria**, getting back to Earth just in time for **STRANGE TALES** to cease publication (how's that for alternate realities in conflict?). The first issue of **DOCTOR STRANGE** followed immediately, and recapped the good doctor's origin. After tangling with **Nightmare**, the monstrous master of deadly dreams, **Doc** immediately embarked on a search for the long-lost **Clea**, who was trapped in the **Dark Dimension**. While there, **Doc** stopped **Dormammu's** intended invasion of Earth. But Earth has enemies from within as well as without, as **Doc** learned when he met the **Sons of Satannish**, a devil-worshipping cult intent on taking over the world. First **Doctor Strange** tangled with one of them, named **Nekron**, but soon he had to take on the entire cult — in 1969.

Meanwhile, in the world of espionage, **Nick Fury of S.H.I.E.L.D.** was keeping himself busy by stopping the dread **Yellow Claw** from taking over the world. What **Nick** didn't find out until the end of the struggle, though, was that the **Claw** and his cronies were in fact robots! As it turned out, the robots were manipulated by **Doctor Doom**, as part of a cosmic game — but **S.H.I.E.L.D.** never found that out. After that, **Nick** was involved in the end of the Earth — or was he? Only **Vaengr**, a being from beyond the stars, knew for sure, and he wasn't telling. To **Nick** the whole thing appeared to be a dream! Then came **NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. #1**, in

which **Nick** met the menace of **Scorpio**, the mystery-man who tried to assassinate **Nick** and kidnap his girlfriend, **Val**. The story ended in a stalemate, and **Scorpio** escaped. **Nick's** next couple of missions took him out of the country, travelling to such places as the isle of **Valhalla**, shooting site of a new monster movie (and home to some real monsters, courtesy of the man called **Centurius!**), and **Scotland**, where **Nick** faced the fury of the **Hell Hound of the Moors**. Back in the States, **Nick** clashed with **Scorpio** again, after a story which recapped the founding of **S.H.I.E.L.D.** and **Nick's** enlistment into the agency. **Scorpio** trapped **Nick** in a **S.H.I.E.L.D.** version of the **X-Men's** danger room, where **Nick** was mistaken for one of the **Life Model Decoys** that was supposed to test the deadly chamber. **Nick** escaped — but so did **Scorpio**, although not before **Nick** found out that the mystery-man was someone he knew. Who? **Marvel** readers had to wait until a later **AVENGERS** saga to find that out. **Nick** certainly had plenty to occupy his time — he had to put an end to the menace of the **Others**, beings from beyond the stars who wanted to destroy the Earth! At the end of the year **Nick** was pitted against his fellow agents of **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, and his indomitable will was all that could save both him and them!

Next: We conclude our look at 1968, with a look at such momentous events as: **Captain America** in combat with the **Red Skull's Sleeper**, **Iron Man's** first meeting with the woman who would become **Madame Masque**, the **Hulk** in **Asgard**, and **Thor** facing . . . **Ragnarok**? Besides this, you'll see the uncanny **X-Men** break up, and the **Sub-Mariner** in the grip of **Destiny**! Be here for the **Marvel Age — 1968 (Part III)**!





STARTM SPOTLIGHT ON

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

by Sandy Hausler

It's a land of wonder, of adventure, fantasy and just plain fun. It's a timeless, magical place where some very special children live and work and play and need never grow old. It's a land of strawbernes, the best anyone has ever tasted. It's called Strawberryland and it's the home of **Strawberry Shortcake** and all her friends.

You probably have seen **Strawberry Shortcake**. For such a young girl, she's very famous. She was created by the American Greeting Company of Cleveland, Ohio for a line of greeting cards. She and her friends became so popular that now you can find **Strawberry Shortcake** dolls, **Strawberry Shortcake** wallpaper, even a **Strawberry Shortcake** TV special. The residents of Strawberryland are very special kids and now you can see them every other month in their own Star Comic, **STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE**. The team of writer **Stan Kay**, penciler **Howie Post**, and inker **Roberta Edelman** will be handling the series.

Howie, the series's penciler, is a real comic book trailblazer. His experience in the field extends back to those halcyon days of yesteryear when Marvel Comics was in its infancy and known to the public at large as Timely Comics. He worked with **Stan Lee** on such humor features as **Nellie the Nurse** and **Boobie Baboon**. He also wrote and drew a lot of what he calls "weird stuff" including some "weird" calendars which featured vampires and other such things.

Howie has done just about every-

thing there is to do in cartooning and animation. He ghosted for **Walt Kelly** for **Oscar Lebeck's PARENT MAGAZINE**. He did a few stints at DC, doing westerns, fairy tale-type stories, funny animals, and even horror. During a period in the 50s he was producer-director at Paramount Cartoon Studios in New York (also known as Famous Studios).

Howie also sold a comic strip to the United Features Syndicate called *The Dropouts*. He later did a stint with Hanna-Barbera animation studios, and then returned to the comic book field about four years ago. Star Comics is proud to have this talented man on their team.

Howie was at first reluctant to take on the art chores for **STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE**. "It was too girly," he told **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**. "I mean a bunch of girls in gingham dresses . . . come on! But **Sid Jacobson** kept at me. 'Give it a try,' he said. So I did. Now I'm in love with the characters." **Howie** did some pages for a presentation to the American Greeting Company and went down for a meeting in Cleveland. One look at **Howie's** work was enough to convince those guys from American Greeting that Marvel's Star Comics was the only company to do a **Strawberry Shortcake** comic and that **Howie** was the artist to do the book.

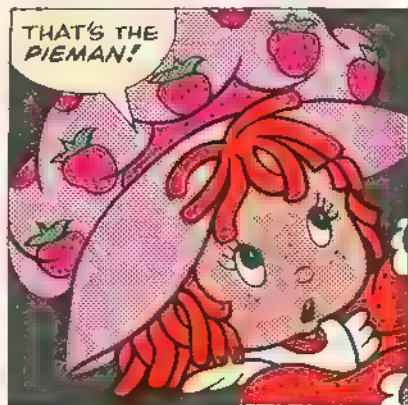
Howie feels very strongly about the work that comic book writers and artists do. In the 50s he often saw the work of talented comic book writers being ripped off by television. "For some reason," he told **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**, "comic book writers felt

that they were violable, that because it was comic books, anyone could rip them off." In fact, **Howie** asserts, it's the guys who try to break new ground every day who are the real base of literary culture.

Sid Jacobson and his Star Comics team agree with **Howie** and take their work very seriously. They intend to become a major force in children's literature, and they want to produce only the best work of which they are capable.

Kids will thrill to the adventures of **Strawberry** and her friends and will be horrified by the evil machinations of the **Peculiar Purple Peman of Porcupine Peak**, baker extraordinaire and rat fink. The residents of Strawberryland will be tested time and again, but they will find that the virtues of friendship, loyalty, honesty, and goodness will carry the day no matter what the trouble.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE is for children, both young and old. Don't miss it!



HE'S ON A MISSION FROM GOD! HE'S . . .

SOLOMON KANE™

by Dwight Jon Zimmerman

Broad-shouldered, dour, a gloomy Puritan who wields a sword with as equal a familiarity as he does a Bible, **Solomon Kane** was pulp writer **Robert E. Howard's** first great hero. The prolific tale-spinner from Texas created **Kane** in the 1920s when he was still in high school. And though **Solomon Kane's** adventures have been overshadowed by **Howard's** other mighty heroes, **Conan** and **King Kull**, Marvel long-ago recognized that, like **Conan** and **Kull**, **Kane** was unique. Now, after years of appearances in other Marvel magazines, series editor **Carl Potts** is proud to announce that **Howard's** Puritan swordsman is at last receiving the spotlight he so richly deserves, the six-issue Limited Series, **THE SWORD OF SOLOMON KANE**.

Written by **Ralph Macchio**, the Limited Series will both adapt **Howard's** original stories and present two new **Kane** adventures. The first issue is an adaptation of "Red Shadows," the 1929 **WEIRD TALES** magazine story in which **Solomon Kane** debuted. It is a moody tale of piracy, murder and vengeance penciled by **Steve Carr** and **Bret Blevins** and inked by **Bret**. The second adventure, an original story, features **Bret** as both penciler and inker. Then, with the third issue and continuing through the sixth issue, **Bret's** pencils will receive embellishment from comics legend **Al Williamson**.

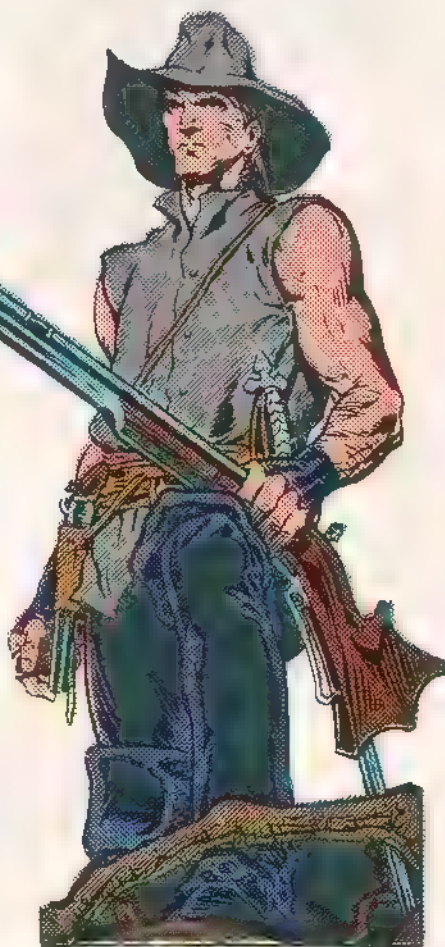
A **SOLOMON KANE** Limited Series was long overdue, agreed **Carl**, **Ralph** and **Bret**. All three have been **Kane** fans ever since they first read his stories years ago in paperback anthologies. Marvel's past **Kane** ap-

pearances in **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN**, **MONSTERS UNLEASHED**, **KULL AND THE BARBARIANS** and **MARVEL PREMIERE** only whetted their appetite for more stories about him!

Ralph Macchio was quick to explain, "**Solomon Kane** is my favorite **Howard** character. He's probably less of a challenge to write than **Howard's** other more famous creations because you always know exactly what he's thinking and what he's going to be doing. **Kane** is very single-minded; he's not someone filled with doubts."

Carl Potts nodded at this, adding, "Since **Kane** is such a strong, solid character who doesn't ponder things much, most of the stories in the Limited Series deal with him affecting other people around him. **Kane** doesn't really have a lot of self-doubts. The closest nod he's ever had to that is his association with **N'Longa**, the African witch doctor, where **Kane** sometimes wonders if he's damned his eternal soul by associating himself with this heathen character. **Kane** is so righteously indignant about anyone or anything that doesn't follow the Puritan dogma that he'll often as not run the person through with his sword."

Ralph believes that **Kane's** absolutist attitude, of seeing everything in terms of "black-and-white" is one of the main reasons why he finds **Kane** so fascinating. And it creates an even more intriguing potential for conflict. As **Ralph** sees it, "In a way **Kane** is insane, and in another way **Kane** is the sanest man who ever lived. By that I mean, if true sanity is knowing what



you do and why, then **Solomon Kane** is the sanest man alive. But if fanaticism is insanity, and make no mistake, **Kane** is a fanatic, then he's the most insane person who ever lived."

Bret Blevins added, "What appealed to me is **Kane's** darkness of vision. And the fact that he has no doubt whatsoever that he is an instrument of God. The way I see **Kane** is that this fanaticism of his is just an excuse because, in reality, he loves the excitement and violence of dispatching all these different forms of evil that he sees."

Yet, even though **Kane** regards himself as a fearsome soldier in the army of the righteous, he is not wholly consumed by his passion to battle evil. His sense of chivalry and justice are highly developed. So much so, in fact, that he will, and as shown in the first issue, does travel to the ends of the Earth to avenge the murder of a young woman.

With the second issue, an original story, **Ralph** said, "We're going to have a lot of character development. We're going to deal with a former friend of **Kane's** who is a fallen Puritan. And we're going to deal with the other side of **Kane**, because even a character who does not have doubts, has fears. And if **Kane** did have a fear, it would be to fall from faith. So even though he will never fall from faith, for **Kane** to see it happen in another Puritan would be very disturbing." Disturbing is putting it mildly, for the Puritan who falls from faith not only is a long-time friend of **Kane's**, he is also a Puritan who has married a witch and has a werewolf for a son!

The third issue will feature the adaptation of "Blades of the Brotherhood" and sees **Kane** once again on a chivalrous and bloody quest to avenge the wrongs done to a young man and woman. The fourth issue will feature the second original story for the Limited Series, which **Ralph** said will continue to explore what makes **Kane** tick. The fifth issue will feature the adaptation of one of **Howard's** most gripping words, "Wings of the Night." Then, in the sixth issue, after an original lead story, **Ralph** and **Bret** will adapt **Howard's** mournful and poignant poem, "The Homecoming." The poem is about **Kane's** return to England and is the final episode in **Kane's** life. But, at its end, **Kane** does not die. Instead, like the spectre of death which he recognizes that he's become, he disappears into the English mists.

"Because the stories are moody, we're very fortunate that **Bret** is doing the art," **Carl** said. "In my opinion, **Bret** is one of the most well-rounded new artists in the business. His drawing ability is phenomenal. And his sense of mood, gesture and emotion

is incredible. His style fits the Limited Series perfectly."

"I like doing gothic material," **Bret** said. "And I felt that **SOLOMON KANE** was the closest I could get at doing macabre stuff for Marvel." One thing that **Bret** was quick to notice about **Kane** and exploit was the fact that **Kane** has the same, grim expression. He only rarely shows any human emotions. "So when something happens that actually reaches him" **Bret** said, "his expression really stands out!"

Another thing that has stood out in this series has been **Bret's** enthusiasm for it. It has amazed even **Carl** and **Ralph**. As **Carl** said, "Bret is one of these guys who is so into his work and so enthusiastic about it that he worries and frets about things that some artists wouldn't even consider. For instance, if he's having problems



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finding how the screws looked and fitted on **Kane's** flintlock, he goes into a panic. He wants to make sure everything is right." And because of his enthusiasm, **Carl** said, "He makes most other artists, myself included, feel like we can't be true artists, because we never get that enthusiastic. We look at him and think, this must be what a real artist is like."

"I guess I'm just an enthusiastic type," **Bret** said. "I hear that from everybody. I think I have an awful lot of energy. I don't know where it comes from. I just love drawing. The more I learn from doing comics, the more fascinating and fun it is doing them. I get so hyped up about the challenges of both drawing an illustration and combining it with the storytelling."

"With **SOLOMON KANE**," **Bret** continued, "I'm trying to put my mind back in that time period of the late 1500's-

early 1600's. Everything they used during this period was handmade. So the technological limitations and how they affected people's lives back then are really important. When you research, you discover things that never would have occurred to you about what peoples' lives were like. And this colors the whole treatment of the story."

Working with **Ralph** on the project has been very rewarding, **Bret** said. "Ralph is very open to suggestions from the artist. In fact, he likes to work with artists who have a strong sense for the story. He includes only the words that are necessary. And whatever is told in the art, he doesn't repeat with words. That is a sign of good comic book writing. The words are supposed to carry only what the pictures can't, and vice versa."

As for collaborating with **Al Williamson**, **Bret** could not be happier. "It's incredible! I still can't believe it!" **Bret** said. "Al is one of my idols. The first thing I saw of his was his **FLASH GORDON** comic book, years ago, before I got into the business. And the fact that I've since met him, and have now become friends with him as well, is just amazing!"

The result of all this excitement and enthusiasm on the part of the creative team has made **Carl Pott's** job as editor enjoyably easy once the tone and direction of the Limited Series was set. "Both **Ralph** and **Bret** are fortunately so good that I don't have to do a whole lot of work," **Carl** said. "What input I have had to include has been extremely minor. The most input I've had has been brainstorming the plot for issue #2. And I had so much fun doing that that I'd like to do it all the time."

The last issue of this Limited Series **Carl**, **Ralph** and **Bret** hope will not be the final appearance of **Kane**. The experience of producing these stories outside of the super hero genre has been so much fun that they hope the readers respond strongly enough to want more tales about **Howard's** dour Puritan. There are still many stories that have not been adapted to comics. But both **Carl** and **Ralph** do not feel limited by only retelling those tales. "There was a lot of **Kane's** life that was never told," **Ralph** said. And **Carl** added that there were whole sections of **Kane's** life, including a trip to the New World that were only hinted at in **Howard's** stories.

The opportunity to flesh out the rest of **Kane's** life has become real with the three original stories in this six-issue Limited Series. And if readers reflect the enthusiasm the creators themselves possess about **Kane**, this will be only the beginning in a whole new line of stories from Marvel.

BULLPEN BULLETINS

AN APOLOGY FROM ARCHIE GOODWIN, EDITOR OF MARVEL'S EPIC COMICS LINE

The last time Editor-in-Chief Jim Shooter let me use this space, there were complaints that I contributed nothing more than a glorified *Hype Box* for Epic's first newsstand comic, *Groo The Wanderer*. Okay! So I got a bit excited over a crack at the Big time! I'm sorry. Even though we've just launched another newsstand title, *Jim Starlin's DREADSTAR AND COMPANY*, I've learned my lesson. I won't say a word to plug it



Well, you can't stop a guy from thinking. After all, *DREADSTAR* is one of the most successful deluxe edition, specialty shop titles ever. But now, in addition, we've got the popular-priced, seventy-five cent *DREADSTAR AND COMPANY* available everywhere! You can follow this cosmic saga from the beginning... monthly! The second issue's coming out this month... Grab issue one while it lasts! And rest easy... with an ad for our next newsstand Epic Comic, *ELF-QUEST* right below, I won't be pulling any other sneaky plugola tactics here



HYPE BOX

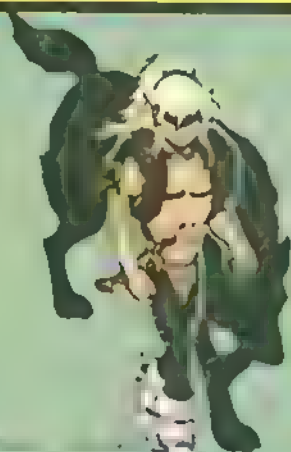
DAREDEVIL #221 — Heather Glenn is dead, and Daredevil is determined to find out who's responsible! His search takes the sightless adventurer far from the gleaming skyscrapers of New York to the night-enshrouded canals of Venice, where a mysterious and deadly organization called the Council of Ten rules supreme! And all they want is Daredevil dead! Check out this tale of mystery and revenge, brought to you courtesy of DENNY O'NEIL and DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI

AVENGERS #258 — You think you've seen Earth's Mightiest Heroes in tough spots before? Forget it! Having watched

the Savage Land destroyed and then defeating the world-devourer, Terminus, the Avengers return home for a well-deserved rest only to discover that they must face the wrath of *Firelord*, one of the most powerful beings in the universe! How can everyone's favorite assemblers handle Galactus's most hot-headed herald and survive? Guest-starring *Spider-Man*! Reserve your copy now of this exciting tale brought to you by writer ROGER STERN and artistic team-supreme JOHN BUSCEMA and TOM PALMER

RAWHIDE KID #1 — He's faster on the draw than Wyatt Earp! He's rustled up more desperados than Buffalo Bill Cody!

He can give Bat Masterson a run for his money! Yep, that's right, pard'ner, the Rawhide Kid is back — in his own four issue limited-series! But he may not be the Kid you remember. The Old West is dying, and this ol' gunslinger has decided it's time to hang up his six shooters for good. Trouble is, no matter how hard the Kid tries, he can't escape his past or his reputation. BILL MANTLO, HERB TRIMPE and JOHN SEVERIN have combined their talents, to create a Western action-adventure series with a twist! Try it — even if you're not a horse opera fan. You'll be glad you did.



First issue in sale now!
Written by E. Richard Pines
ELFQUEST
Available here

THE LETTER COLUMN THAT ATE NEW YORK

Send your letters to **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**, % Marvel Comics Group,
387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York, 10016

Hello again! Congratulations are due this month to *Dave Callans*, of Rochester, Minnesota. He's this month's Name-The-Letter-Column guy. Well done, *Dave*!

Once again we'll mention that if you want to see a title of your devising up there at the top of this page — jot down your suggestions and send 'em to us! That being said . . . it's letters time!

Dear **MARVEL AGERS**,

Issue #25 of **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** was sensational! Since I don't own a calculator, I often have trouble adding up the cost when I buy my Marvels each week. I cut out your price guide as suggested and use it lots.

The "Coming Attractions" are also very helpful. I like knowing when my favorite Marvels come in, such as **THE NEW MUTIES**, **SPIDER-MAN**, **PETER PARKER**, **POWER PACK**, **ALPHA FLIGHT**, **G.I. JOE**, **ROM**, **THE X-MEN** (of course) and many more.

"Hembeck's Page" was very funny I couldn't stop laughing.

I love *Cloak and Dagger* and am glad to hear that they are getting their own book. Those exclusive penciled pages were neat.

The **GARGOYLE Limited Series** looks like it's gonna be yet another Marvel classic.

I really like the "Marvel Age of Years Past" feature. 1966 was a very eventful year.

The Marvel Oscars were super! Almost all of my favorites won. But I was really hoping **ROM** would win something.

C. C. Hii

Well, maybe next year, C.C. It's never too soon to start campaigning, after all! And thanks for all your kind words. We spend a lot of time

dreaming up new features like the price guide and the look at *Ed Hannigan's CLOAK AND DAGGER*, and we're glad they're appreciated.

Dear **MARVEL AGE PAGE** (or whatever you're calling it this month),

I'm in the middle of reading the letters page, and an interesting question came to mind after reading *Stephen Harshbarger's* letter. The question is, "How old do you have to be to actually work for Marvel?" I'm 15, and would darn-near give my soul to pencil and plot for my favorite comics company, you. At the same time that I'm writing this little letter, I'm preparing submissions to send to the almighty judges, the Submissions Editors. So I figured I'd stop after finishing the page I'm working on, and find out if I'm old enough or not, and possibly save myself from work. I've been working on this idea for weeks now, and I'm close to completion.

Well, I'll close on this note, and come what may, Make Mine Marvel.

Richard Clark
Garfield Heights, OH

Don't stop, *Richard*! As has been mentioned in these pages before, our very own editor in chief, *Jim Shooter*, was only thirteen when he began writing professionally. At Marvel, we're not interested in artificial restrictions like age. If you can write and draw interesting, exciting, and well-crafted comics — that's all it takes. Talent and ability are more important than age.

Dear **MARVEL AGE** people,

I am writing about the *Marvel Super Heroes Role Playing Game*. I bought it about six months ago and I play it with my cousins. We all think it is the best game we ever played. The reason I wrote is that it's so hard to

make bad guys for the game. Why don't you have a comic book (like **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE**) that has all the villains' abilities? Well, how about it?

Daren Nowak
56933 Tulip Road
New Carlisle, IN 46552

Look no further, *Daren*! **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE** does list all of Marvel's major meanies, complete with a detailed listing of their powers. Now that you've got dozens and dozens of villains available, we wish you the best of luck and continued enjoyment with the *Marvel Super Heroes Role Playing Game*. Just make sure the good guys keep triumphing, okay?

Dear Marvelites,

Claremont! Cockrum! **NIGHTCRAWLER**! Limited Series! NOW!

Seriously, *Kurt Wagner* is one of the most overlooked, underused characters in the entire Marvel Universe. He is a superb hero who I'm sure is well-liked and very deserving of many times the attention he is receiving.

So please, grab *Claremont* and *Cockrum* and chain them to their desks until they complete it. Trust me, it will be a huge success!

Todd Enckson
2106 Midlothian Road
Roseville, MN 55113

We trust you all right, *Todd*. Matter of fact, if you're the kind of reader who reads the whole magazine before the letters column, you may have already noticed that two issues from now, we'll tell you everything you want to know about the **NIGHTCRAWLER Limited Series**! Not only is *Dave Cockrum* handling

the art, but he's writing the Limited Series as well! We snuck a peek at some of the artwork in Ann Nocenti's office, and it looks fantastic! Sound okay?

Meanwhile, we've got some more questions about various magazines, so let's run through a few of 'em . . .

Dear Marvel

Since it came out, G.I. JOE has been my favorite Marvel comic, but I've always had one question. Is G.I. JOE part of the Marvel Universe? If so I would like to see them team up with Captain America

James Pion
47 Crestwood Street
Chicopee, MA 01020

No, James, the elite anti-terrorist force we fondly refer to as the Joes exists in some private universe of their own, well apart from the Marvel Universe.

Dear Marvel,

I have one question and I would like an answer What ever happened to the BLACK PANTHER Limited Series?

I've seen ICEMAN and now GARGOYLE, but I've yet to see THE BLACK PANTHER

C Deas

The BLACK PANTHER Limited Series was taken off the schedule a while ago, to give the creators the time they need to make it a really top-notch series. It's not currently scheduled now, but we haven't forgotten it. Bob Budiansky, the series editor, assures us that it'll be back on the schedule when it's ready to be published — and you can be sure we'll announce it here.

Dear Marvel,

You just came out with a CAPTAIN BRITAIN mag It was in black and white, so I didn't even read it Then I picked up CAPTAIN AMERICA #305. I said, "Wait a minute! This guy is great!" So I read my CAPTAIN BRITAIN #1 and loved it, even the other stories like "Nightraven." One problem. I can only get the CAPTAIN BRITAIN mag in a New York comic shop No one around me gets that mag in Please tell me, can I sub-

scribe?

Richard "Prince" Clement
1523 E. 15 St.
Brooklyn, NY 11230

That CAPTAIN BRITAIN series is actually put together in merrie olde England by the ace editorial department of Marvel U.K. The only way it's currently being distributed here in the U.S. is through the comics specialty shops, along with Marvel U.K.'s version of DOCTOR WHO. So your best bet is to get a local comics shop to start carrying CAPTAIN BRITAIN, and then you'll be able to pick it up every month without a trip into Manhattan. Okay?

Dear Folks

Sound the trumpets! Throw a party! Have a parade! The Black Cat is gone!!!

Now let's have a responsible girl for everyone's favorite web-slinger. Someone who wouldn't continually wonder, "Why doesn't he stay Spider-Man all the time?" Someone who would respect his financial difficulties



and isn't a former criminal. Someone who's a mutant. No, not **Storm**, not **Rogue**, not **Rachel**. Who else but: **DAZZLER!**

Now before someone sets fire to my house, let me explain my opinion. **Alison** has a good head on her shoulders, so she would respect his secret identity. She has money problems herself, so she wouldn't ask **Pete** about giving up his civilian identity to be **Spider-Man** all the time. **Ali's** as innocent and clean as **Captain America** (unless she's defending herself). If she was seen with **Spider-Man**, people like **Nekoboh** wouldn't bother her. It wouldn't do much for her reputation, but she hasn't got much of a good one anyway.

I don't mean anything deeply serious, but I haven't seen them together since **DAZZLER #1** and **MARVEL TEAM-UP #109**. She does **Spider-Man** some good, the way his life has been. How about it?

(Hey, who threw that rock through my window?)

Roy Jones Jr.
Upper Marlboro, MD

You'll get no argument from us, **Roy!** **Archie Goodwin**, **Mike Carlin**, **Paul Chadwick**, **Jackson Gulce**, **Jim Owsley**, **Mike Higgins**, **Danny Fingerioth**, **Tom DeFalco**, **Ron Frenz**, **Peter David**, **Greg LaRocque**, **Joe Rubinstein**, **Jim Mooney**, **Keith Williams** and **Rich Buckler** (not to mention **Spidey** and **Dazzler**) might have something to say about it, but we're staying out of it!

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

It seems to be that **Barry Windsor-Smith** has returned to Marvel within the last few months. Please correct me if I'm wrong, but I think **Barry** did the covers for **MARVEL TEAM-UP #150**, **KULL #9** and **DAREDEVIL #217**.

A few months ago, I remember reading a story in **MARVEL FAN-FARE** that **Barry** illustrated, featuring **the Thing**. I only hope that he has returned to Marvel Comics for a lengthy stay.

Mike Zytka
RR #2, Box 247
Toledo, IL 62468

So do we, **Mike**, so do we. You're right, **Barry** did all those covers you mention, in addition to writing as well as illustrating that **Thing** story. And of course, **Barry** was the penciler on "Lifedeath," in **X-MEN #186**, one of the most acclaimed stories we've published in quite some time.

Barry's pencilling a sequel to "Lifedeath," in **X-MEN #198**, and there's another project or two in the works



right now involving **Barry**, and as soon as they're firmed up enough to announce, you can be sure you'll be hearing about 'em here!

Dear **AGEmakers**,

Happy second birthday! **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** has the distinction of being the only comic that I subscribe to, and needless to say, I will continue to subscribe to your fine book. The New Talent Department and the look back at the Marvel Age gone by are the most enjoyable parts of the book. And keep the **Fred Hembeck** page coming!

As for Limited Series, please, no more Limited Series with the **X-Men** or any of its members! It seems as though every other Limited Series that comes along has the **X-Men** or one of its members in it. Yes, I realize **THE X-MEN** is Marvel's most popular book, but there is a whole universe of characters out there. Use some of them! Here are my suggestions for Limited Series: **Forbush Man**, **Paladin**, the **Scarecrow** (last seen in **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #18**), the **Wasp**, **Nick Fury**, and the **Sandman** (or some-

thing told from a bad guy's point of view).

Thanks for listening. Until **Wolverine** sees a psychologist, make **Marvel** mine!

Mark Hudson
533 Jackson Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37205

Well, I can see where you might get an argument about your proposed "X-Men ban," **Mark**. But some of your Limited Series suggestions are pretty intriguing. Next issue we'll tell you all about the **NICK FURY** 12-part Limited Series by **Bob Harras** and **Paul Neary**, okay?

In the meantime, this is page 32, and that's where the letters column ends. But we'll be back next month, along with the rest of the magazine, and boy do we have a doozy planned: Letters! Answers! A little Pictures! Italicized and bold-face type! Maybe even a copyright notice or two! Be here, or you'll miss it!

But seriously folks ... have a good month!

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THE MARVEL AGE 1985 CALENDAR

MAY

JIM SALICRUP--WRITER
RON ZALME--ARTIST
ANDY VANCHUS--COLORIST



SUNDAY

GOTTA MAKE
THE BIRTHDAY
CAKES.



MONDAY

GOTTA MAKE
THE BIRTHDAY
CAKES!



TUESDAY

GOTTA MAKE
THE BIRTHDAY
CAKES!



5

TOMORROW
IS DAVID
MICHELLE'S
BIRTHDAY!!



6

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY,
ROBBIE CARROLLA!



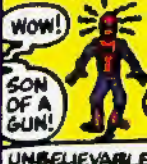
12

HAPPY
MOTHER'S
DAY!



14

MEET
AMAZ
SPIDER



19

OOPS! YESTER-
DAY WAS
JAMES FRY'S
BIRTHDAY!



21

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
TO



26

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY,
HERB TRAMPE!



27

MEMORIAL
DAY



28

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
MOONIE KURA



R.I.P. BUCKY BARNES

